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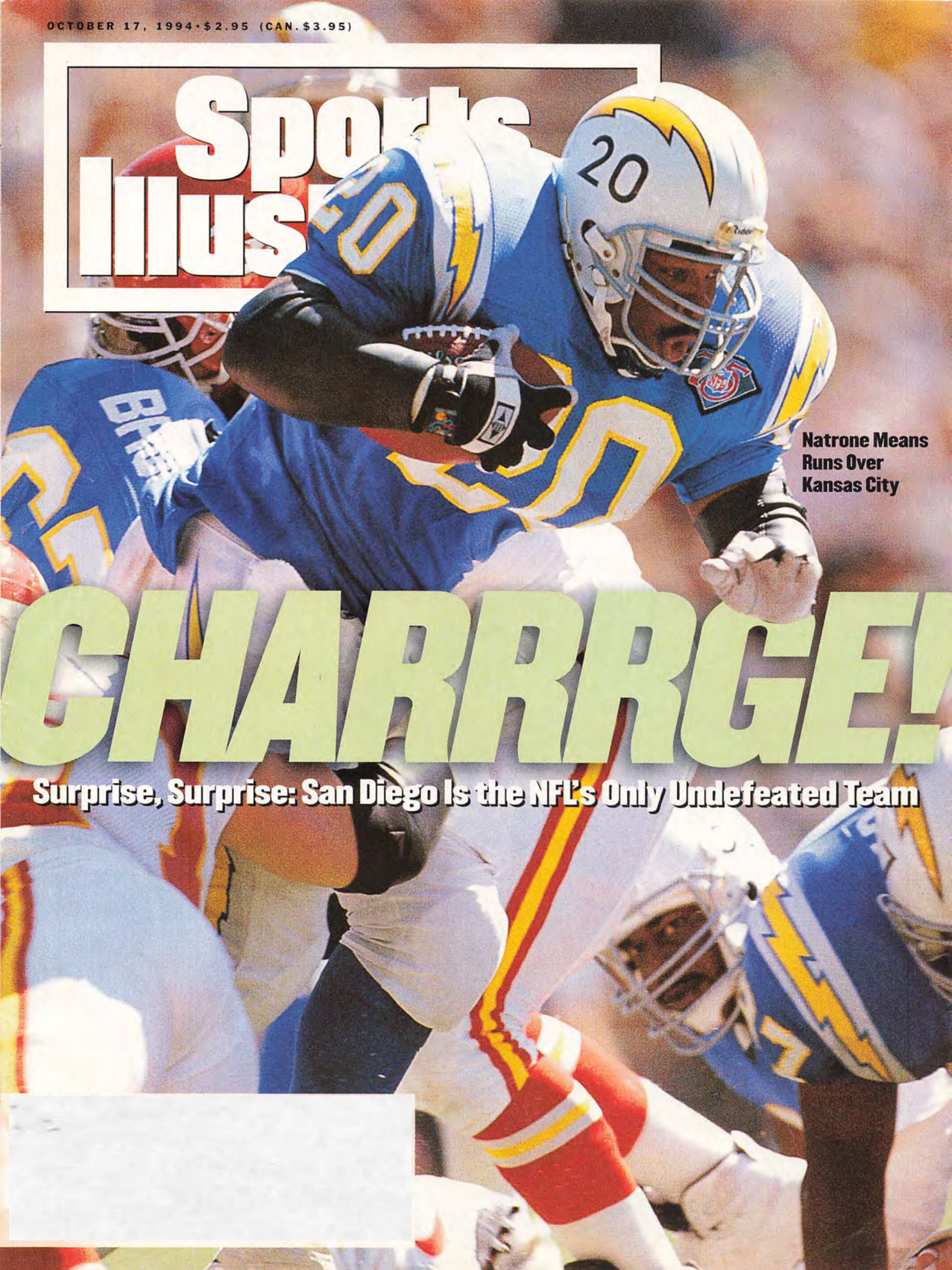

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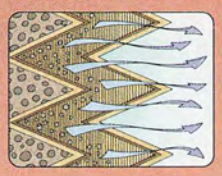

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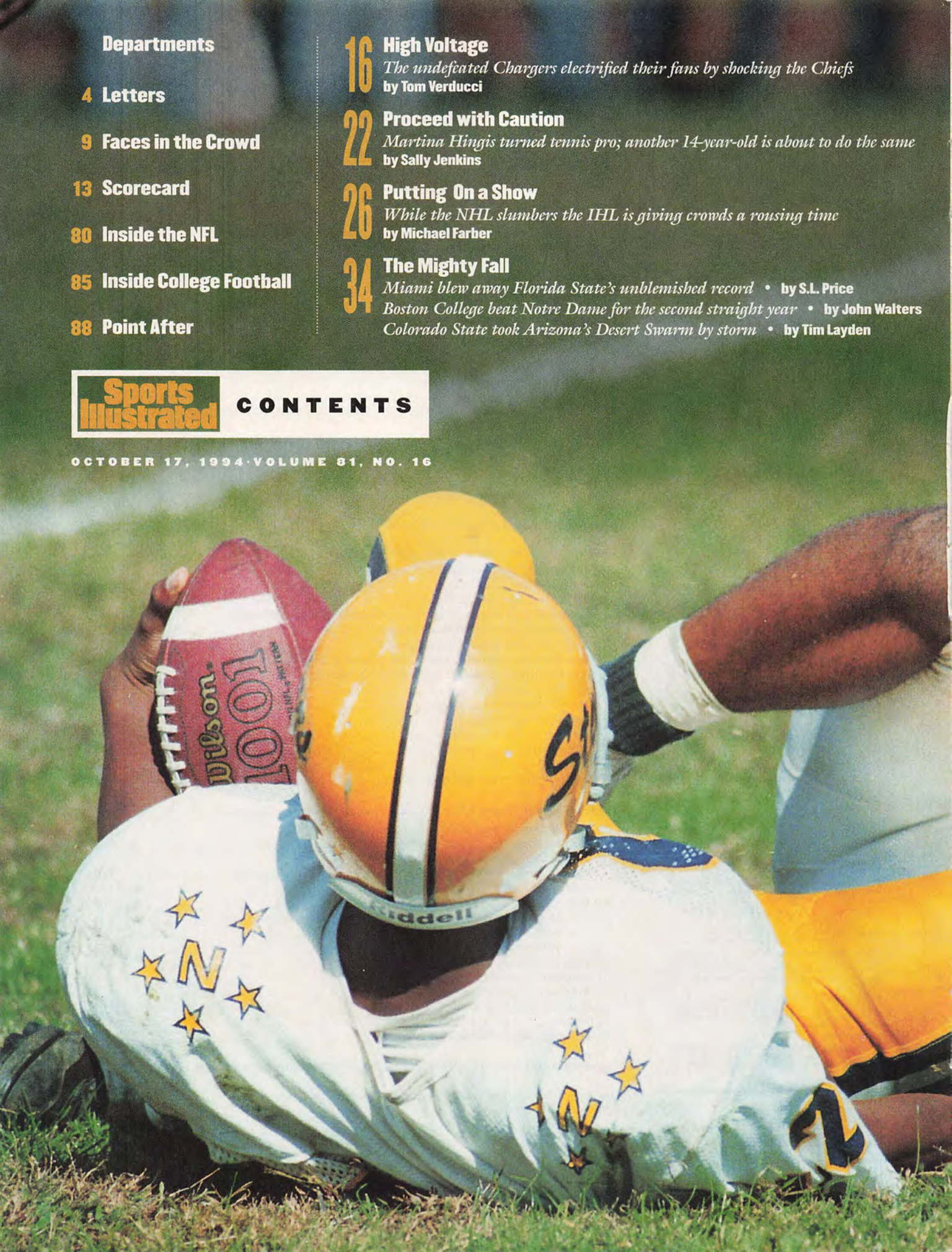

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A Real Eyeful

Lawrence (N.J.) High's Mark Anderson appeared to tackle Nottingham High's Mike Brown with his face in last Saturday's game.

STANLEY BRICK/THE (TRENTON, N.J.) TIMES

I eagerly await your 50th-anniversary issue, which, I trust, will include Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Mickey Mantle and Willie Mays.

HUGH M. RODGERS, EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.

Top 40

Your list of the 40 individuals who have most influenced sports during the past four decades (*Forty for the Ages*, Sept. 19) was sure to be controversial. No doubt it was a daunting task to compress 40 years into such a small list, and I commend SI for the effort. Here's to 40 more years!

JIM JIVIDEN, *Ada, Ohio*

What? Don King but no Willie Mays? By what standard? I guess this really is the age of the antihero.

STEVE SILVERMAN, *New York City*

How can you select five NBA players and not select Wilt? He revolutionized the game and rewrote the record books.

JOHN A. BUYARSKI, *Medford, N.J.*

To bemoan the exclusion of Mays, Mantle and Chamberlain and not that of Roger Bannister, Jean-Claude Killy and Juan Manuel Fangio is to dismiss the opinion of the *world's* sports audience.

TOM WELLS, *Orinda, Calif.*

Curt Flood, by paving the way for free agency, affected the sports world more than any other individual.

JOHN E. DUCKWORTH, *Dittmer, Mo.*

How about Walter O'Malley? By moving the Dodgers from Brooklyn to Los Angeles, he engineered the end to an age of innocence in sports, ushering in an era of unparalleled cynicism and skepticism.

RICHARD G. KENT, *Bridgeport, Conn.*

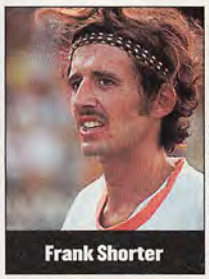
If one person did more to change the image of pro football than John Unitas, please let me know. He took a dull Sunday-afternoon game and transformed it into America's biggest spectator sport.

GEORGE L. RALPH JR., *Salisbury, Md.*

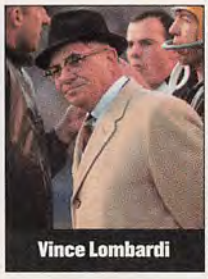
John Unitas

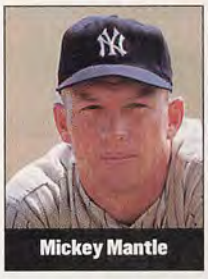
Willie Mays

Gordie Howe


Frank Shorter

Wilt Chamberlain


Vince Lombardi


Mickey Mantle

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

Chris Evert

Walter O'Malley

CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT: WALTER IOOSS JR.; JOHN BRENNEIS; NEIL LEIFER; NEIL LEIFER; RICHARD MACKSON; AP; TONY TRIOLO; HY PESKIN; WALTER IOOSS JR.; JAMES DRAKE

Why is O.J. Simpson not on the list?

LIZ BROWN, *Frederick, Md.*

What about Vince Lombardi? His five NFL titles in seven years, including three in a row, is unmatched.

G. STEVEN LARSON, *Madison, Wis.*

Wayne Gretzky at No. 12 I can live with, but naming Bobby Orr No. 31 while omitting Gordie Howe is an injustice to Howe's 30-plus years of great hockey.

BILLY RYAN, *Chicago*

Although Jim Fixx wrote two informative books on running, Frank Shorter was the person most responsible for the running boom in the U.S. His gold medal performance in the 1972 Olympic marathon inspired countless Americans to take up long-distance running.

PAUL W. BISHOP, *San Diego*

How could you exclude Dick Fosbury? If anyone has changed his sport, Fosbury has. After he won the 1968 Olympics, the Fosbury Flop quickly became the dominant style of high jumping.

MATTHEW MEYERS, *New York City*

Certainly somewhere on the list there should have been room for Chris Evert, whose year-in, year-out consistency brought her at least one Grand Slam singles title for 13 consecutive years. At the very least Evert should have been co-listed with Martina Navratilova, a la Larry Bird and Magic Johnson.

MICHAEL A. DUNN, *Park City, Utah*

Russell over Chamberlain? Clemente over Mays and Mantle? I guess I can live with those. But I would like to speak for all sports fans: The inventor of the remote control has altered the way we watch sports more than the creator of ESPN. Couch potatoes all over the world will agree with that.

IAN PAUL, *Hershey, Pa.*

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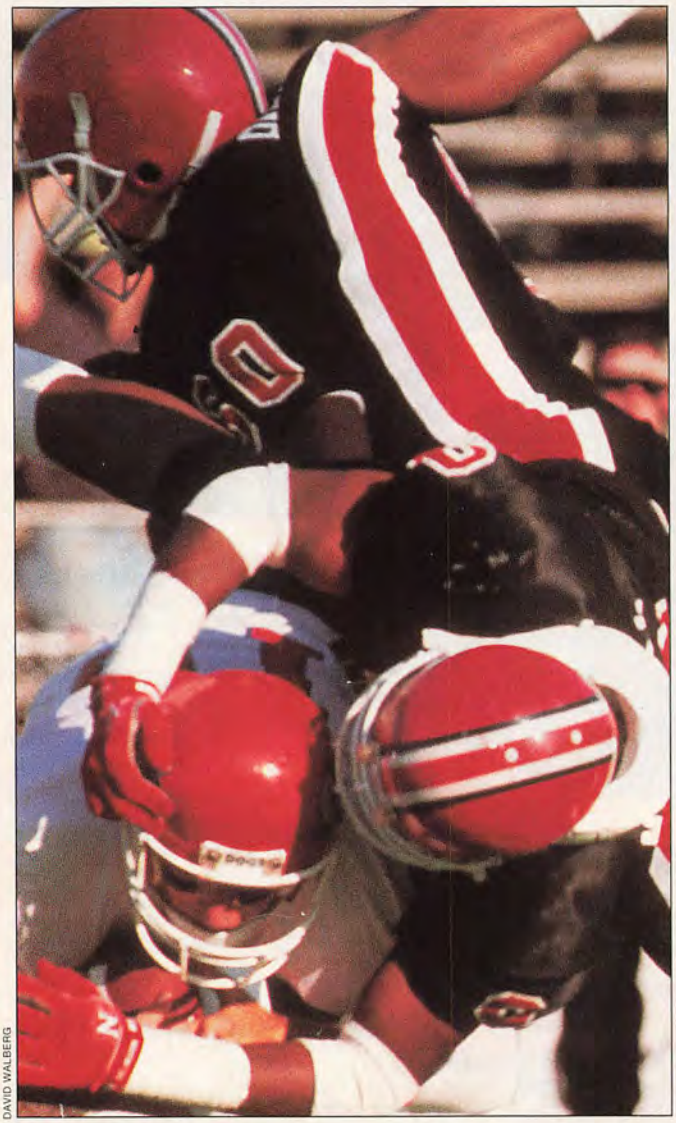


DAVID WALBERG

1920s

FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS, INVENTORS have searched for the best way to protect football players from traumatic blows to the head. Left to their own devices, players in the 1870s grew long, shaggy hair and wrapped it with brightly-colored turbans or scarves. A padded leather "head harness" was developed around the turn of the century, followed in the 1920s and '30s by leather-and-fiber models that marginally improved safety. Finally, after World War II, manufacturers adapted a light, durable material that had been used to line the steel helmets of American GIs: plastic.

1930s

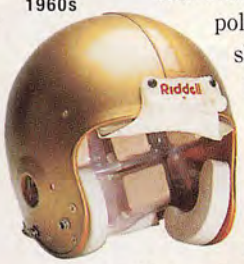
1940s

Today, various plastics permeate pro and college helmets. Used properly, helmets can prevent serious injury, but nothing protects a player who literally risks his neck by spearing an opponent with the top of his head.

The helmet's outer shell is polycarbonate, a tough, shatter-resistant plastic used in many automobile bumpers. The shell is lined with several layers of material: a vinyl-and-rubber foam to absorb the shock of a jarring collision with a runner or the turf, polyurethane foam to increase comfort, and a sheet of vinyl to protect the foam inside the helmet from hair and body oils. Inflatable vinyl cells surrounding the head can be pumped with air to provide a safety-enhancing custom fit.

1950s

1960s



Face masks became common in the mid-'50s. Made of steel, they are coated with two ultra-thin plastic layers. The first layer, a tough ionomer resin, is also used in golf ball covers. The top layer, invulnerable to chipping, is baked on.

1980s

The face mask itself (removed from the '50s, '60s and '80s examples shown here) is mounted on the helmet with brackets made of shock-resistant molded plastic. The chin strap is vinyl-coated nylon webbing.

1990s

The helmet's snap-in front and side pads are fashioned from plastic foam. Noise-reducing polyethylene is used for the area around the ears, and cushy polyurethane protects the forehead.

Long hair and scarves are optional.

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Scorecard

EDITED BY JACK McCALLUM AND RICHARD O'BRIEN

A Good, Hard Check

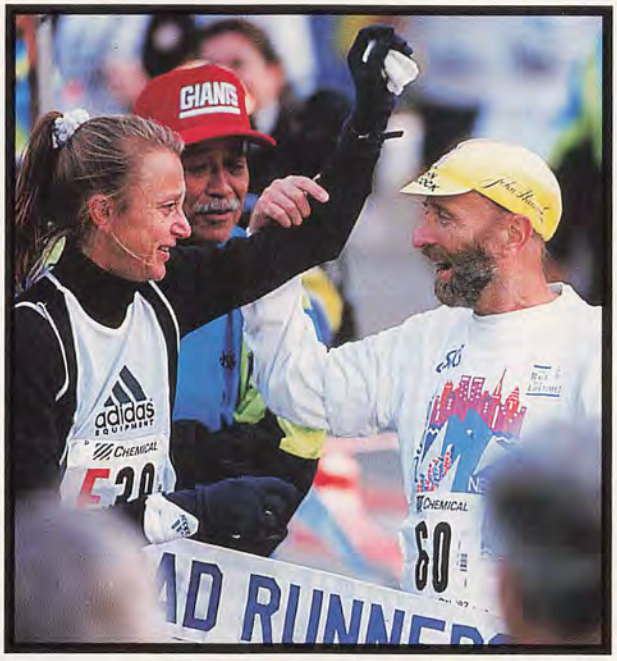
A BEER-FUELED "initiation party" that reportedly got out of hand has left the Williams College men's hockey team with what promises to be a seasonlong hangover. Responding to accounts of the Sept. 22 team gathering, which was characterized as a hazing party for new players and which resulted in the trashing of a dorm basement and a freshman player's being taken to the infirmary with alcohol poisoning, Williams administrators suspended all five seniors from the hockey team for the entire 1994–95 season. Senior captain Garrett Nannene was also suspended from school for a year. In addition, Williams president Harry Payne instructed the Ephs, last year's ECAC East regular-season co-champions, to forfeit their first two games of the season, against Rochester Institute of Technology and Wesleyan. "The line is clearly drawn, and, we expect, the lesson is learned," said Payne.

Many students at Williams have criticized the suspensions as too harsh, and the players involved might appeal, insisting that they've been unfairly made examples of. Still, Payne and Co. are to be commended for acting swiftly and decisively—and with a rare disregard for the athletic bottom line. Of course, Division III Williams has little at stake financially. What's the chance of a big-time Division I school acting so expeditiously and emphatically in a similar situation?

Model Citizen

Arizona Cardinal defensive back Lorenzo Lynch, who has sustained his eight-year NFL career by being a menace to receivers, will spend 30 weeknights in jail for failing to meet the terms of his probation resulting from a March 1992 misdemeanor conviction for assaulting a man in a Phoenix barbershop. Lynch completed just 40 of the 100 hours of community service he had agreed to perform. In addition to the jail time (he is being freed on weekends and between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. during the week), he must attend anger-control counseling, primarily because he also violated his probation in June by attacking his girlfriend.

One might think that all this would have made Lynch consider changing his ways. One might want to think again. Asked recently if he considered the counseling necessary, Lynch responded, "No way, man."



In spite of cancer, Lebow (with Waitz) finished in '92.

MANNY MILLAN

A Course Well-Run

Long before he discovered that he was, above all else, a runner, Fred Lebow was an immigrant, a Romanian-born Jew who came to the U.S. in 1951 and wound up working in New York City's garment district. Lebow, who died Sunday at 62 after a second bout with brain cancer, never lost two of an immigrant's most precious assets: ambition and the sense that, in a land where a man isn't sure of the rules, he can make up his own.

Lebow's great gifts were grand vision and nuts-and-bolts pragmatism. If a project struck him as worthy, he found a way to will it into being. A one-mile road race? Why not run it down the city's swankiest boulevard, Fifth Avenue? A 10K for women? The Mini-Marathon quickly became the largest and most prestigious women's road race in the world. When Lebow took over as president of the New York Road Runners Club in 1972, it had 270 members; now it has 31,000.

Lebow saved his greatest passion for the New York City Marathon, which makes sense, for it is in every way a race of immigrants, with thousands of runners, foreign and domestic, cheered on by every group in the city's vast melting pot. Lebow, an avid runner of modest attainments, founded the marathon in 1970, using his own money to buy 10 watches for awards. That first year 127 people, among them Lebow himself, ran the four-loop course in Central Park. The marathon grew steadily, if modestly, until somebody—no one is certain who—suggested that the 1976 race expand to all five boroughs of New York City. At first even Lebow had his doubts, but once persuaded, he hurled all of his energy, imagination and considerable stubbornness into making it the best and biggest marathon in the world—it had 28,140 entrants last year.

Lebow was found to have cancer in February of 1990. Even as he underwent chemotherapy, he continued to run, first on the roof of the hospital and then back out on the roads and paths of Central Park, where he was greeted constantly by other runners. Though Lebow ran 69 marathons, he ran his own five-borough race just once, in 1992, 18 months after major surgery. He and an old friend, nine-

Travelin' Man

AFTER SPENDING the 1953 football season as an assistant coach at Washington, Lou Saban, then 32, left to take the same job at Northwestern. "All coaches change jobs, especially when they're young," he said at the time. Well, Saban may no longer be so young—he turns 73 this week—but he's still changing jobs. On Oct. 10 he signed on as head coach and development officer at Alfred (N.Y.) State. The Saban odyssey:

J. OTTO SEIBOLD

1. **Case Institute (now Case Western Reserve),** *Cleveland. Head coach, 1950–52*
2. **University of Washington,** *Seattle. Assistant coach, 1953*
3. **Northwestern,** *Evanston, Ill. Assistant coach, 1954; head coach, 1955*
4. **Mutual Benefit,** *Chicago. Insurance sales agent, 1956*
5. **Western Illinois,** *Macomb. Head coach, 1957–59*
6. **Boston Patriots.** *Head coach, 1960–61*
7. **Buffalo Bills.** *Scout, 1961; head coach, 1962–65*
8. **University of Maryland,** *College Park. Head coach, 1966*
9. **Denver Broncos.** *Head coach and general manager, 1967–71*
10. **Buffalo Bills.** *Head coach, 1972–76*
11. **University of Cincinnati.** *Athletic director, 1976*
12. **University of Miami.** *Head coach and athletic director, 1977–78*
13. **U.S. Military Academy,** *West Point, N.Y. Head coach, 1979*
14. **Tampa Downs Racetrack,** *Tampa. Executive assistant, 1980*
15. **New York Yankees.** *President, 1981–82*
16. **University of Central Florida,** *Orlando. Head coach, 1983–84*
17. **New York Yankees.** *Consultant and scout, 1984–86*
18. **Martin County High School,** *Stuart, Fla. Assistant coach, 1986–87*
19. **South Fork High School,** *Stuart, Fla. Head coach, 1988*
20. **Georgetown High School,** *Georgetown, S.C. Head coach, 1989*
21. **Middle Georgia Heatwave** *(semipro), Macon, Ga. Head coach, 1990*
22. **Peru State College,** *Peru, Neb. Head coach, 1991*
23. **Tampa Bay Storm** *(Arena Football League). Assistant coach, 1992*
24. **Milwaukee Mustangs** *(Arena Football League). Head coach, 1994*
25. **Alfred State College,** *Alfred, N.Y. Head coach, 1994–??*

time New York City Marathon winner Grete Waitz, finished in 5:32:34, cheered on every step of the way by grateful citizens of the Big Apple.

On Nov. 6, when the New York City Marathon is held for the 25th time, that gratitude will again be on display. "It was funny trying to explain Fred to the newsmen who didn't know him," said Road Runners Club publicist Raleigh Mayer on Sunday. "They said, 'He had no wife or children, no family?' I said, 'No, everybody feels like Fred is part of their family. He has the biggest family in America.' "

Semi-Gross

Basic Football Productions (BFP), a Wisconsin video company, cites research estimating that 70 million women in America don't know how many points a field goal is worth. We're not sure whether this is good news or bad, but BFP clearly finds it alarming enough to have released a 55-minute video, *Basic Football*, intended for women. The star of the video is that smirking scatback, Burt Reynolds, who suited up in *Semi-Tough* and *The Longest Yard* and, in real life, for Florida State.

The video opens with Reynolds in an empty football stadium. "This is where they play football," he says. "Which is a lot better than playing on a basketball court." It goes downhill from there.

The video isn't just imbecilic; it's also offensive. In one scene a muscular tank-topped male "teacher" walks into a classroom filled with women and asks, "Who wants to learn about football?" Giggling and smiling coquettishly, the women raise their hands. Pretty retro, boys.

Worse is the scene in which a female "interviewer" tells a "quarterback" that it doesn't seem so bad when his pass protection breaks down. "Oh, no?" says the quarterback. "Do you have any idea what it's like to have 1,500 pounds of angry beef tryin' to get you, grab you, throw you on the ground?" The camera shifts to the woman, who, incredibly, has a dreamy, suggestive smile on her face.

For you 70 million women, we hereby inform you that a field goal is worth three points. This video is worth nothing. And if you still want to see Burt smirking, try renting *Smokey and the Bandit*.

What Price Glory?

Any aging athletes still clinging to mementos of past victories may be interested in what Finnish Olympic legend Lasse Viren has been up to. Winner of the 5,000- and 10,000-meter runs at both the 1972 and '76 Games, the 45-year-old Viren recently put his four gold medals up for sale. The price: One million Finnish markka, or about $200,000, apiece. "If somebody gives a million, he may choose the medal," said Viren, who insists that his decision to sell is not based on any financial hardship. "What does it matter if they are with me or somewhere else?"

This Week's Sign That the Apocalypse Is Upon Us

AS PART of an introductory legal skills course, all first-year students at Harvard Law School are being required to read *Juice: The O.J. Simpson Tragedy*, an "instant book" published by *Globe*, a supermarket tabloid.

They Said It

Sergei Nemchinov
New York Ranger center, on the NHL lockout: "This wouldn't happen in Russia."

FACES IN THE CROWD

JEFF VENDSEL

Tiffany Yick

SAN FRANCISCO

Yick, 23, led the Just Volleyball team to the women's title for the third consecutive year and was named MVP for the second straight time at the North American Chinese Volleyball Tournament. In the final her outside hitting was the key to the 15–1, 15–8 win over Montreal Freemason.

TOM VOLK

Coty Pensyl

NAZARETH, PA.

Coty, 6, won seven straight beginner-class quarter midget competitions at the Blue Mountain track. His performances in the 3/4-mile races, during which the cars average 20 mph, qualified him to advance to the novice level, where he placed second and third in the two races he entered.

ANDREW MARX

Brent Bridges

PINE BLUFF, ARK.

Brent, 15, a third baseman, led Pine Bluff to a second-place finish at the Babe Ruth World Series by going 9 for 17 with three home runs—one a grand slam—seven RBIs and seven runs scored. Despite his team's loss in the title game, he was named the series MVP.

ROBERT JOHNSON

George Sloan

FRANKLIN, TENN.

Sloan, 55, tied the American amateur steeplechase record for career wins when he got his 147th victory at the St. James Maiden Claiming Hurdle. Sloan, who has been competing in steeplechases since age 15, is the only amateur to be a champion jockey in both the U.S. and the United Kingdom.

DENNY LANDWEHR

Ahmed Plummer

WYOMING, OHIO

Ahmed, a senior quarterback and safety at Wyoming High, scored all 20 of the Cowboys' second-half points in a 34–21 victory over Loveland High. Ahmed, a three-year starter, passed for 112 yards, rushed for 158, recovered a fumble and had 10 tackles during the game.

NANCIE BATTAGLIA

Monica Sellberg

SCARSDALE, N.Y.

Monica, a senior striker on the National Sports Academy boys' soccer team, became the first girl to score a hat trick in a Section VII boys' soccer match when the Mountaineers defeated Long Lake Central School 7–2. She had two goals in the first half and another 17 minutes into the second.

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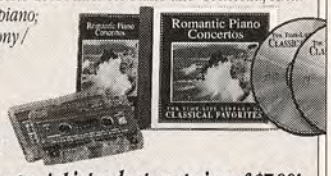
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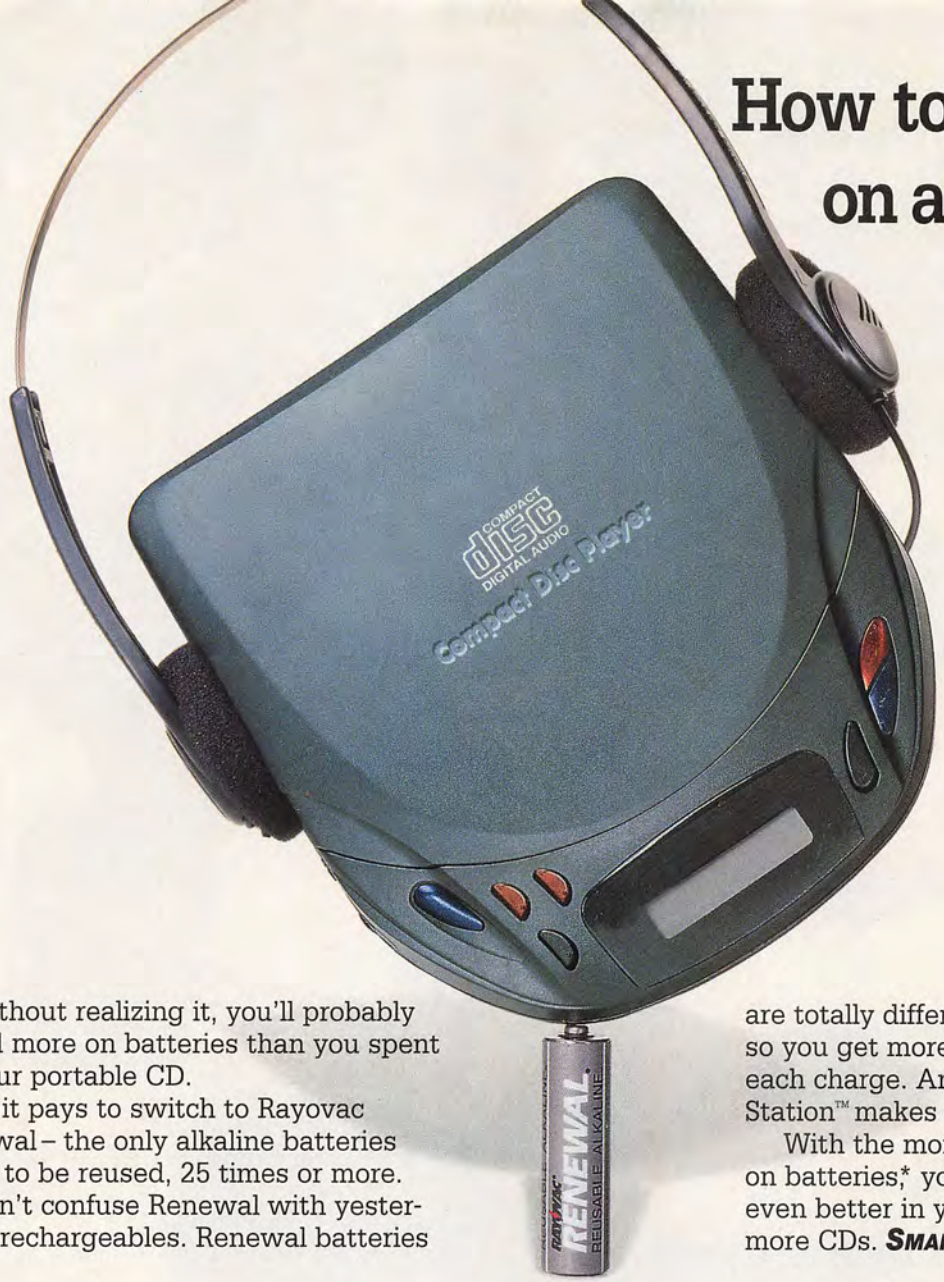

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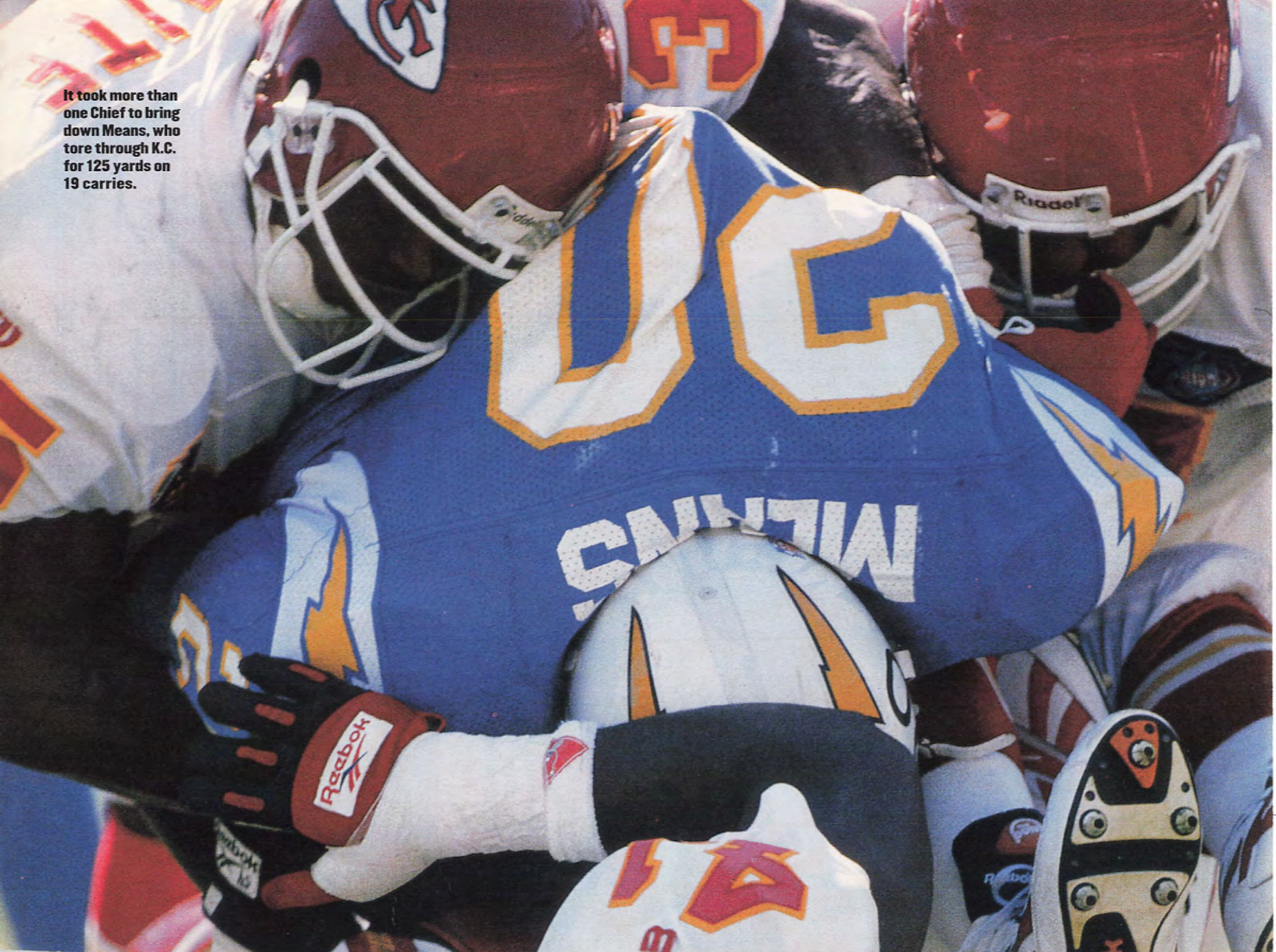
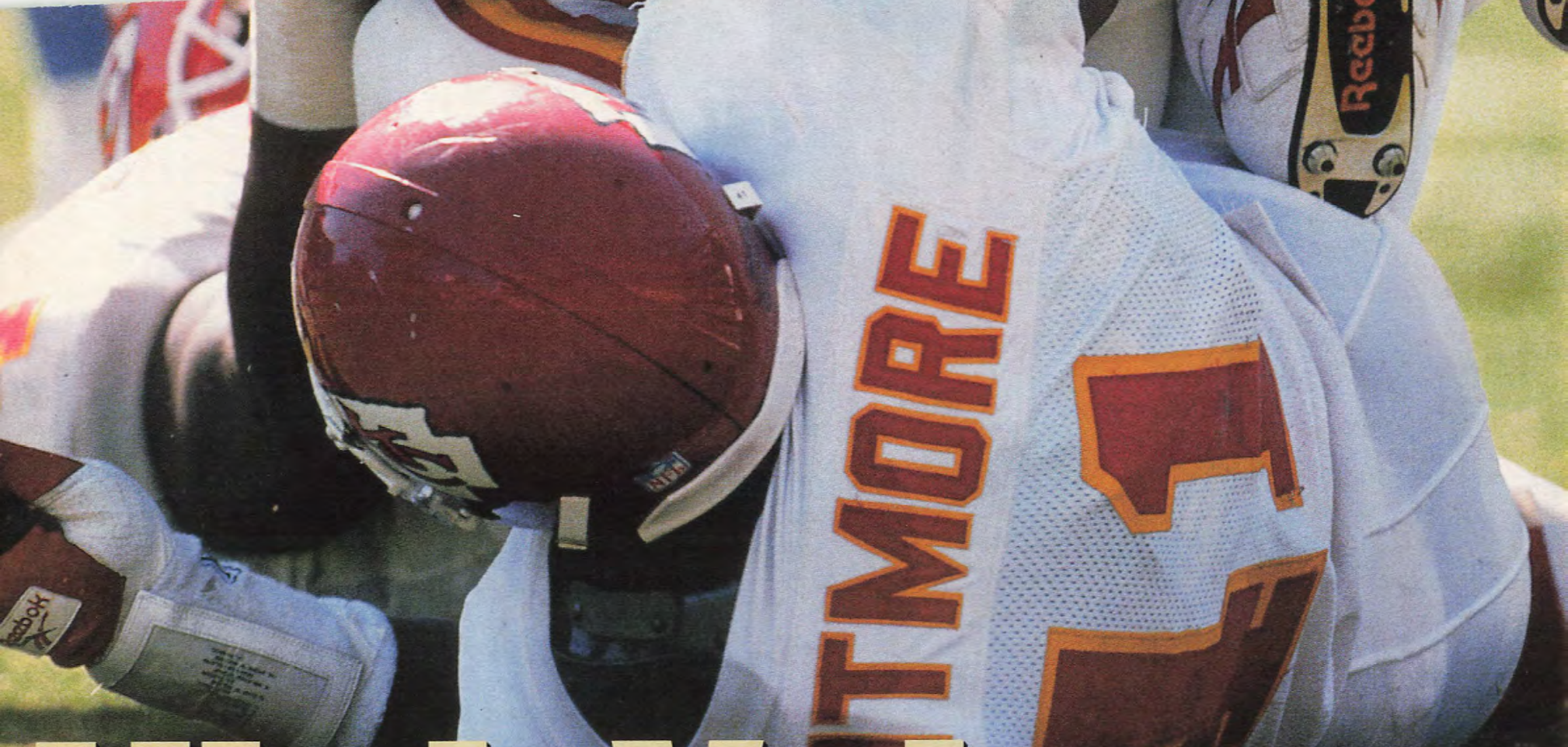


It took more than one Chief to bring down Means, who tore through K.C. for 125 yards on 19 carries.



High Voltage

The undefeated San Diego Chargers electrified their fans by shocking the Kansas City Chiefs 20–6 · by Tom Verducci

PETER READ MILLER

HERE IS some classified information on the San Diego Chargers: Last Saturday's edition of *The San Diego Union-Tribune* included 75 want-ad listings from people wanting to buy—or, in a few rare cases, sell—tickets to the team's home game the next afternoon against the Kansas City Chiefs. Now, that's news. For most of the past decade, Charger tickets have been about as coveted in San Diego as mittens. A matchup of these two teams only two years ago in San Diego, for the season opener, no less, left 15,641 seats unsold.

Ah, but San Diego had reeled off four wins to open this season, a feat no Charger team had accomplished since 1980. And now here were the Chiefs, the defending AFC West champions, led by 38-year-old Joe Montana and 34-year-old Marcus Allen, coming to Jack Murphy Stadium. No wonder it was the hottest ticket in town, hotter even than another geriatric team that was playing the Murph the following week: the Rolling Stones.

At least two fans, proving you can't always get what you want, offered to swap their Stones tickets for Charger tickets. Not a tempting deal, that one: A field-level ticket for the game fetched up to $275, while the going rate to see the Stones from the same perch was $125. Who could keep his bearings in all this excitement? Certainly not the person who offered Stones tickets on the "50-yard line."

Charger fans have gone nuts over the Bolts. The hibachis were fired up as early as 9:30 in the morning in the stadium parking lot, and fans who arrived later than that found themselves in an unaccustomed traffic snarl. That included several former players who were to be honored as part of Alumni Day but didn't make it in time for the pregame ceremonies. Hey, the old days were never like *this*.

All told, a crowd of 62,923 was accounted for—the most people ever to watch a Charger home game—and the throng created enough noise to actually give the Chargers a home field advantage. Center Courtney Hall, whose six years in San Diego are second only to the nine years put in by defensive end Leslie O'Neal, could recall nothing like it for a regular-season game at the Murph. "Not since I've been here," he said. "Then again, they haven't had much to cheer about."

The Chargers hadn't beaten the Chiefs since 1989, and Hall and O'Neal were the only current San Diego players still around from the team that pulled off the victory. Since then, the Chargers had lost eight straight regular-season games to Kansas City. This is a franchise that has qualified for the playoffs once in the previous 11 seasons. So, who knew if the Chargers could keep winning? Not even their general manager, who on Friday afternoon admitted to nervousness. "I know we're a pretty good team," Bobby Beathard said. "But I know the Chiefs are a real good team. We're trying to get to the Chiefs' level, in terms of what they've accomplished, and this is part of the test of getting there. People are watching to see how we handle being the only undefeated team and in a game this big."

Since Humphries took over as the starter in '92, the Charger outlook has been nothing but sunny.

When it was over, and the Chargers had beaten the Chiefs 20–6, the big crowd was chanting "Five-and-oh," and Montana was doubled over at the waist, gasping for breath in the heat of a long afternoon in which the temperature on the field hit 99.5°. The Chargers looked terrif-

ic, and it wasn't just those gorgeous powder-blue jerseys and white helmets, the same ensemble worn by the 1961 team that began 11–0 and made it to the AFL championship game. "Sweet," was running back Natrone Means's sartorial assessment. "They'd look even sweeter set off by black shoes."

Alas, the commemorative uniforms won't be worn again (the players are allowed to keep them), though a deli owner in Mission Valley, Calif., collected nearly 5,000 signatures on a petition asking the club to adopt them permanently.

Suitably attired, the Chargers played a near flawless game: no sacks allowed, no interceptions thrown, one fumble, one penalty for five yards, and a score on each of the four possessions when the offense got inside Kansas City's 20-yard line. The Chargers finally graduated from the surprise team of the NFL to one of its elite.

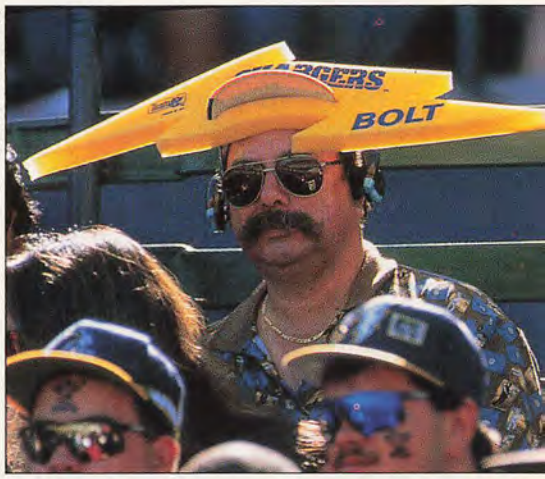
"K.C. has been a team we haven't been able to get off our backs," tackle Harry Swayne said afterward. "We talked about it all week. It's time for us to get over the hump. Well, we did it. That was a big step for this team. We've shown a lot of toughness in five games."

San Diego already has swept the AFC West, beating the Seattle Seahawks by 14 on the road and coming from behind in the fourth quarter to beat the Denver Broncos and the Los Angeles Raiders—also away from home. "People said, 'Yeah, you beat the Broncos, but maybe they're not so good,' and they said the same thing about the Raiders," said Means. "This game sends the message around the league that the Chargers are for real."

It was a coming-out party for Means, too. He gained a career-high 125 yards on 19 carries and wore out the Chiefs on the game's only two touchdown drives. On the first drive, late in the second quarter, Means carried the ball on every play. He covered nine, eight, six, six and, finally for the score, nine yards to put San Diego ahead 13–3. In the fourth quarter, Means accounted for 57 yards of a 77-yard drive while breaking off runs of 25 and 23 yards. "I felt like they were getting tired," Means said. "You could feel the arm tackles." Quarterback Stan Humphries and wide receiver Mark Seay took care of the last five yards on a pass play that made the score 19–6 with less than eight minutes left.

"This is just a great, great win," said Charger coach Bobby Ross, a rare display of effusiveness for the former Army lieutenant who has coached at two military academies. After losing his first four games as the Charger coach in 1992, Ross has gone 24–9 while stockpiling hard-working soldiers to his liking. They include Means, a second-round pick last year; Seay, a 1993 waiver pickup who once took a bullet near his heart while protecting his niece from gunfire; and defensive tackle Rueben Davis, who signed as a free agent this year and has played the past four games with an elaborate contraption

JOHN W. MCDONOUGH (2)



These are heady times for Charger fans, who saw their defense blast Montana and recover the fumble.

WALTER IOOSS JR.

on his arm to protect a dislocated elbow.

Davis twisted a knee at the start of the fourth quarter as Kansas City drove inside the San Diego 10. "Six or seven guys fell on my leg, and it just went numb," Davis said. When the trainers began sprinting toward him, Davis angrily waved them back to the sidelines. "No way I'm coming out," Davis said later. The knee and the defense held, forcing the Chiefs to settle for a field goal. Davis helped limit Kansas City to 64 yards on the ground in 18 attempts.

And then there is Humphries, very much Ross's kind of guy. Three weeks ago against the Raiders, he returned to the game after injuring his knee, thereupon leading the Chargers to the winning drive. The tale grows more valorous with each retelling, but Humphries is indeed a rugged leader; he piloted the Chargers to a 17–0 playoff win over the Chiefs in 1992 with a dislocated throwing shoulder. When Ross replaced Bob Gagliano with Humphries in the second game of that season, it was the 14th change of San Diego quarterbacks in a 66-game span. The Chargers were 22–44 in those games.

Since then, with Humphries as their starter, the Chargers are 22–8. The team may at last have found a successor to Dan Fouts. No wonder Charger fans wear T-shirts that say PROTECT STAN on both the front and back. He has the competitiveness of Fouts, the long-ball accuracy of Joe Namath and, as his size-38 pants attest, the midsection of Sonny Jurgenson.

Just as Beathard had worried about his team's showing with so much on the line, he fretted, too, about how well Humphries would respond to his new role as the AFC's highest-rated and newly hyped quarterback. "Yes, it's a test in the same way," Beathard said. "All the talk all week about him has put him in a new position." Not to worry. Humphries completed 16 of 25 passes for 171 yards without forcing any balls into coverage, after which he hustled out of the locker room after briefly taking reporters' questions. "I don't care for this, but it's part of my job," he told the assemblage. "I never claimed to be the flashiest quarterback. I worry a lot less about what people say than I do about how I play."

Humphries's performance gained added luster when measured against Montana's. The Chief quarterback heaved 55 passes—the most he has thrown in a game in almost eight years. While he did complete 37 of those for 310 yards, for the second straight game Montana could not get his team into the end zone, the first time he has suffered back-to-back blankings in his 155-start career.

On Sept. 25 the Chiefs lost 16–0 to the Rams in a horror that was passed off as the by-product of a rampant flu bug and a flat effort. "Marty felt like we didn't play hard enough and weren't ready to play," defensive end Neil Smith said of coach Marty Schottenheimer after a practice last week. "So he's worked us hard. When you get that back-to-basics speech, you know you're in trouble."

Schottenheimer has a knack for bringing his teams back from losses, and this time he had the luxury of a bye week. His career record after a loss was 44-10-1, including a 24-4-1 mark with Kansas City. What's more, Montana had not lost consecutive games in nine years.

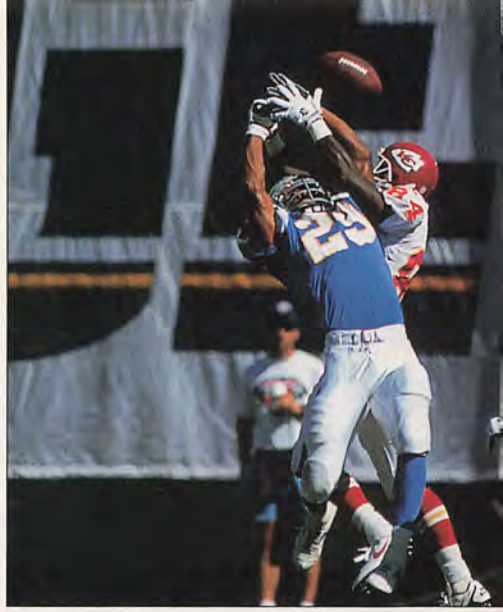
All of a sudden the questions about Kansas City run deep. Montana has neither a running game to worry opponents nor breakaway receivers able to turn those 10-yard slant patterns into catch-and-run plays that chew up big yardage. The Chargers, playing a basic zone almost all afternoon, willingly permitted Montana the underneath throws.

Montana dropped back to pass on each of Kansas City's final 16 plays in a futile effort to get a touchdown. "It was such a big deal for them," O'Neal said, "they were running a no-huddle offense."

With 37 seconds left, Montana brought his team to the one but took a hit in the ribs while being sacked by Lonnie Young. He was having trouble breathing, taking short, quick breaths to mute the pain in his ribs. He completed one pass for five yards and then, as the clock ran out, lofted a ball toward J.J. Birden in the back corner of the end zone—just in front of the reunion of the Chargers' cheerleaders—a group, by the way, that did not choose to wear its 1961 uniforms. San Diego cornerback Dwayne Harper batted the ball away.

Montana immediately ripped his helmet off and doubled over, taking a huge gulp of air. Humphries rushed to offer the usual postgame salutations, but the old quarterback hardly noticed him.

Winded and weary, Montana trudged off the field in a condition that made you think he would not be exit-row qualified for the flight home to Kansas City. Humphries left in a happy sprint, his pretty blue shirt hardly soiled. As he disappeared through a tunnel, he raised an index finger to the fans, a crowd of believers that is growing larger by the minute. ■

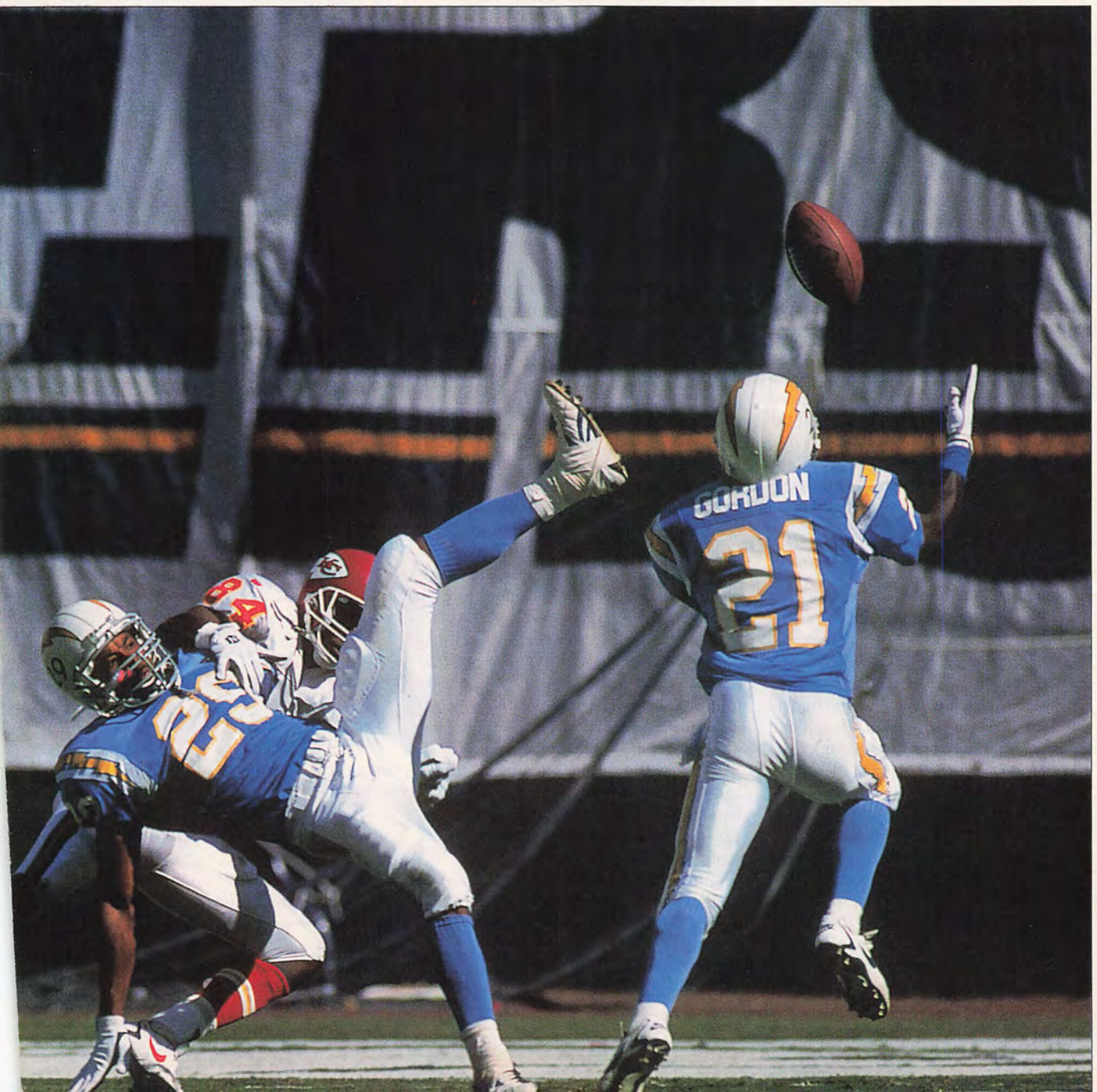


Darren Carrington (29) and Darrien Gordon collaborated on a second-half Charger interception.

JOHN W. MCDONOUGH (3)

GORDON
21

GORDON
21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Proceed With Caution

Martina Hingis turned pro and another 14-year-old, Venus Williams, is about to, though almost everyone agrees they're too young • by Sally Jenkins

THERE ARE no more fairy tales in women's tennis, only cautionary tales. And although Martina Hingis is a fresh-faced child from an Alpine village in Switzerland, her story isn't *Heidi,* and her professional debut didn't occur once upon a time but on Oct. 4, just four days after her 14th birthday.

Hingis is a mere ribbon of a girl who still wears braces. In the players' lounge at the Saalsporthalle in Zurich, she passed the time before her grand entrance at the European Indoors championships by flipping through magazines. Nearby, the woman she was named after, 37-year-old Martina Navratilova, propped her feet on a coffee table and read *The Infinite Plan,* a novel by Isabel Allende. Hingis is just six months older than the toy fox terrier who accompanies Navratilova on the road.

As 170 members of the international media looked on, Hingis then took the court for her match with Patty Fendick, a 29-year-old American. Conspicuously absent was Navratilova, who remained in the lounge eating dinner and made it clear she does not approve of Hingis's decision to turn pro so young. "I don't," Navratilova said. "But who am I?"

Debuts are for 18-year-old socialites, not 14-year-old kids. Hingis probably should have been riding her horse, Shubidu, or listening to Mariah Carey on her headphones, or admiring the poster of *Baywatch*'s David Hasselhof that hangs on her bedroom wall in Trübbach, a village in northeast Switzerland.

The fact is, almost nobody thinks anymore that it is a very good idea for 14-year-olds to turn pro, one exception being International Management Group (IMG), the agency that signed Hingis to a five-year contract 18 months ago and has already obtained endorsement contracts for her with Yonex rackets, Sergio Tacchini clothing and Opel cars, which she is, of course, not old enough to drive. Hingis's mother, Melanie, a 37-year-old former top Czech player, was also in favor of the move, having groomed her daughter for a pro career ever since she named the child after countrywoman Navratilova. "We've worked 10 years for this," Melanie said. "It's a natural development."

There is no question that the younger Hingis, the junior French Open and Wimbledon champion, has the talent to play professionally—witness her 6–4, 6–3 defeat of the 45th-ranked Fendick. Hingis blithely said of the victory, "I'm not that surprised. I've beaten better players." She followed that performance with a 6–4, 6–0 loss to No. 5 Mary Pierce, a setback that was more respectable than it sounds.

Even in losing, Hingis demonstrated elegant ground strokes, a champion's two-handed backhand, a sound grasp of strategy and a composure far beyond her years. Just how good is Hingis? "Top 30," ventured Phil de Picciotto, No. 1–ranked Steffi Graf's agent. "But that doesn't mean I think she should rush to attain the ranking."

Ironically, Zurich was scheduled to be the site of the comeback of another young woman who once was in a rush to get to the top: Jennifer Capriati, who four years ago—when she was not yet 14—reached the final in her first pro tournament. But after a struggle with burnout and a stay in a Miami drug-rehab clinic, Capriati is still attempting to earn her high school equivalency diploma and contemplating whether to relaunch her career, which has

The confident Hingis pronounced herself unsurprised after whipping Fendick in her debut.

BOB MARTIN

been dormant since the 1993 U.S. Open. Last month she signed up for the Zurich tournament and another in Filderstadt, Germany, then withdrew from both, citing a groin injury suffered in practice. She has yet to announce further plans.

Capriati's troubled history doesn't worry Hingis. "She's just one person," Hingis says dismissively. "There are a thousand girls in the rankings."

And at least one more 14-year-old on the horizon. The day before Hingis's match with Fendick, Venus Williams of Pompano Beach, Fla.—whose father, Richard, had repeatedly vowed she would not become another underage pro—announced that she would become just that by playing in a tour event in Oakland on Oct. 31. Williams was given a wild-card entry by the tournament organizer, which is (surprise!) IMG. "I'm completely against it," her father said of the move. "I think it's insane." But he claims to be powerless to control Venus, who, he said, "makes her own decisions." How soon before she signs with an agent and launches herself on a full pro schedule? There were no predictions from Richard on that. "I've already made a fool out of myself once," he said.

As has, some would suggest, the sport. In September, reacting to the cases not only of Capriati but also of such earlier prodigies turned flameouts as Tracy Austin and Andrea Jaeger, the Women's Tennis Association announced new age restrictions beginning in 1995: Fourteen-year-olds will be barred from regular tour events, while players aged 15 to 17 will be

CARYN LEVY

phased in to top-flight competition. By turning pro now, Hingis and Williams are free of all such restrictions. By letting them turn pro now, the WTA, not incidentally, has presumably eliminated the possibility of lawsuits by either woman.

Women's Tennis Association chief executive officer Anne Person Worcester says that no one in her organization was entirely happy to see Hingis and Williams turn pro and promises to offer career and psychological counseling and medical monitoring to younger players, including Hingis and Williams. "I understand how crucial it is to approach their debuts in a comprehensive and cautious manner," Worcester says. "I think we learned a lot from the Austins and Jaegers and Capriatis. I believe we are significantly better equipped to promote career longevity."

Fortunately, if any 14-year-old seems capable of dealing with the white-hot glare of the spotlight and the relentless pressure of a pro career, it is Hingis. She was almost impertinently comfortable with the other players in Zurich. She was also at ease with, if not delighted by, the battery of cameras and microphones on hand for her debut, perhaps because she has aspirations toward modeling. "Emotionally, she is very mature," says her agent, Damir Keretic of IMG.

Williams's coming out is set for Oct. 31, but her father's verdict is already in: "I think it's insane."

Behind many an ambitious child is a driven parent, and in this case it's Melanie, who grew up a short distance from Ivan Lendl in the eastern part of what was formerly Czechoslovakia and who had a nodding acquaintance with Navratilova. Hingis's father, Karoli, is an administrator at a tennis club in the Czech Republic.

Martina, who grew up in Roznov, first displayed her athletic ability by taking to skiing when she was three, which was also about the time Melanie put a sawed-off racket in her hand. Martina began entering tournaments at age five. Her parents divorced when she was six, and Melanie moved to Trübbach after marrying Andreas Zogg, a Swiss computer specialist. They live in an apartment complex surrounded by postcard-perfect views of the Alps and pastures dotted with grazing cows.

Martina and Melanie maintain they are approaching Martina's career cautiously. "Everything is very simple, very basic," Melanie says. How can she protect her daughter from the danger of burnout? "By being flexible," she says. "We have no big plans." Hingis practices two hours a day and works only a few minutes on her serve, to protect her shoulder from injury.

Martina, who would be an aspiring equestrienne were it not for tennis, says she spends nearly as much time riding her horse and learning to show-jump as she does on the court. Her riding is encouraged by Melanie, who has an almost holistic approach to coaching that includes stretching sessions that look more like dance routines. She encourages her daughter to ski and swim and to draw lessons from those sports that she can use in tennis, and the result is a player of fluid, instinctive beauty. "I play what I feel," Martina says. "I respond to the ball."

But a tennis career is clearly Hingis's priority now, and there are already signs that her childhood will come second to it. Two months ago she switched from the local public school to a private school that specializes in educating aspiring athletes—particularly skiers—and allows them generous amounts of time off for world travel. Hingis is said to get excellent grades, but she admits that her math has slipped due to her absences from class. It could slip more, because Keretic has said that Hingis may play as many as a dozen events in 1995, including the Australian Open in January, which would be her first pro Grand Slam tournament appearance.

So the latest child prodigy has arrived. There is nothing to be done about it but admire Hingis's immense talent and hope that this story, against the odds, has a happy ending. ■

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Putting On a Show

While the NHL slumbers, the International Hockey League is giving crowds a rousing time

by Michael Farber

AS BEST Detroit Viper coach and general manager Rick Dudley can piece it together, this is the story: Toronto Maple Leaf star Doug Gilmour was at home on Sept. 30 in Toronto watching the Vipers' first game on television, saw 20,000 happy fans cheering Detroit on in the glittery Palace of Auburn Hills and began feeling a little morose about the NHL's lockout. While the game was still in progress, he had a friend call the Vipers, a new franchise in the International Hockey League, to ask if Dougie could come out and play.

Can you blame him? The IHL not only offers credible hockey but also has shoot-outs to settle ties, power plays sponsored by pizza parlors and intermissions featuring human pucks and fans in inflated sumo-wrestler bodies rumbling at center ice. Do you think Gilmour could bump into a giant skating-knight mascot in the corridors of Maple Leaf Gardens?

"This is a league for the masses and not the classes," says Atlanta Knight president Richard Adler, who picked up the phrase while working for 16 years as a vice president of marketing for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bai-

The opening-night festivities in Atlanta (left), Detroit (above) and Las Vegas had plenty of fanfare—and attracted a lot of fans.

ley circus. "It's entertainment, with the ice as the stage. The NHL is a coat-and-tie league. We're not. They're the Mercedes, the best hockey league in the world. We're the Chevrolet. Of course, more people drive Chevys."

So for now, the Vipers' Dudley and the other general managers in this pro league for the proletariat have given Gilmour and all other inquiring NHL players—and there have been several—a polite no to their requests to temporarily join the IHL. It may be that one or two clubs in the league will change their minds if the NHL's deadline for starting the season this Saturday passes without a new collective bargaining agreement; Los Angeles King defenseman Marty McSorley, for example, says he would like to join his brother Chris, who is associate coach of the IHL's Las Vegas Thunder. But most of the league's teams seem willing to continue down the path that combines hockey with hokum and low ticket prices with low salaries.

In its 50th season, the IHL, known as the I to everyone in hockey, has become a magnet for players, fans, businessmen and, as we'll soon see, maybe even several million francs, lire and kronor. The average attendance for the first weekend this season was an impressive 10,540 per game, and nine of 14 home openers were played to capacity or near-capacity crowds.

The I formation of 17 teams now includes clubs in two venerable NHL cities, Detroit and Chicago, as well as in such metropolises as Denver, Houston, Minneapolis–St. Paul and San Diego. The league has teams in 14 of the top 36 U.S. markets and has plans to expand to American cities that fit the description of "major league." There will be three new cities next season, then two a year for the rest of the decade. But the big news is that the Chevy is being exported: By next October the IHL hopes to have a six-

JOHN W. MCDONOUGH

Photographs by David E. Klutho

With their NHL favorites idled, fans in Detroit got their fix at a Viper game.

team European league with franchises in England, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Sweden and France.

If the IHL had said 15 years ago that it was expanding to Paris, the assumption would have been that the league was bound for Paris, Ky.—because Paris, Texas, would have been too long a haul from Kalamazoo. The IHL was then a Michigan-based bus league, a circuit of Flint, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Port Huron and Saginaw, with side trips to exotic burgs like Milwaukee, Toledo and Fort Wayne, Ind. Back then, the *I* might as well have stood for *Interstate*. Men sweated in small arenas for minuscule paychecks and played a game straight out of the movie *Slap Shot*, in which the struggle was to keep your teeth and your dignity. The IHL was as much a sentence as it was a league, the closest thing professional hockey had to Attica.

"The I was the pits then, as low as you could sink," says 34-year-old Viper goalie Rick Knickle, who first played in the league in 1979–80. "And it was definitely *Slap Shot*. In Muskegon I played with one of the Hansen brothers [as they were named in the film], Jeff Carlson. One day I'm going down the hall in the hotel, and his door's open, and he's playing with his toy cars, just like in the movie."

"My first game, Milwaukee versus Saginaw, set the record—444 penalty minutes," says Scott Gruhl, who scored a record 596 regular-season and playoff goals during 13 IHL seasons and is now a player–assistant coach with the Richmond Renegades of the East Coast Hockey League. "There were two 30-minute brawls, the game took 4½ hours, and I felt like I spent the whole time hanging on to somebody. I'm thinking, What have I done? What am I doing here? You played out of fear, and you played in tough rinks. The dressing room in Grand Rapids had a bare lightbulb swinging from the ceiling, like you see in prison movies. The stands were right above the room. Coffee and pop would dribble down on us. And there were these low-hanging pipes. Between periods, when one of our guys called for our trainer, the trainer turned around, hit his head on a pipe and knocked himself cold. We're getting ready to go back on the ice, and we're giving him his own smelling salts."

"It's amazing that NHL players are now asking to play in the I, considering that back in the 1960s, guys had it written into their contracts they couldn't be sent to the International League," says Kalamazoo Wing general manager Bill Inglis.

It was in June 1984 that the black I changed forever. The Central Hockey League folded, and two of its teams, Salt Lake City and Indianapolis, became the eighth and ninth IHL franchises. While Indianapolis was just another Midwestern city in I country, Salt Lake City was special—because teams were forced to fly there. Neckties came out. Coolers from the back of the bus were discarded. The simple act of air travel seemed to turn the players into self-respecting pros. And the league took off. In '85 the IHL adopted a shoot-out in the event of a tie so that each game would have a winner. Rules against fighting became stricter, and penalties more severe. By the late '80s the IHL had evolved into the equal of the reputable American Hockey League, which has franchises throughout the Northeast and in Canada's Maritime Provinces, and by '90 the IHL had surpassed the AHL as hockey's premier minor league. Ten years after current Cleveland Lumberjack owner Larry Gordon bought the troubled Muskegon franchise for one dollar, the entry fee for an expansion franchise in 1994 was $5 million.

The AHL has settled in as a developmental league, with all but one of its 16 teams affiliated with NHL clubs. Only 10 IHL franchises serve as NHL farm teams; the other seven are independent, free to snag whatever players they can. If you're a former NHLer or an upwardly mobile free-agent farmhand, and you're given a choice of Las Vegas and San Diego or the more bucolic charms of Hershey, Pa., and Sydney, Nova Scotia, which do you choose?

With the IHL's rising prestige and hockey's newfound reputation as a hot sport, is there any limit to the league's appetite for expansion? "It's gratifying to be at this level," says Inglis, whose K-Wings play in a rink with 5,113 seats, the IHL's smallest. "But

Former NHLers like Ron Wilson (far left) and Dave Barr (11) have found a home in the I.

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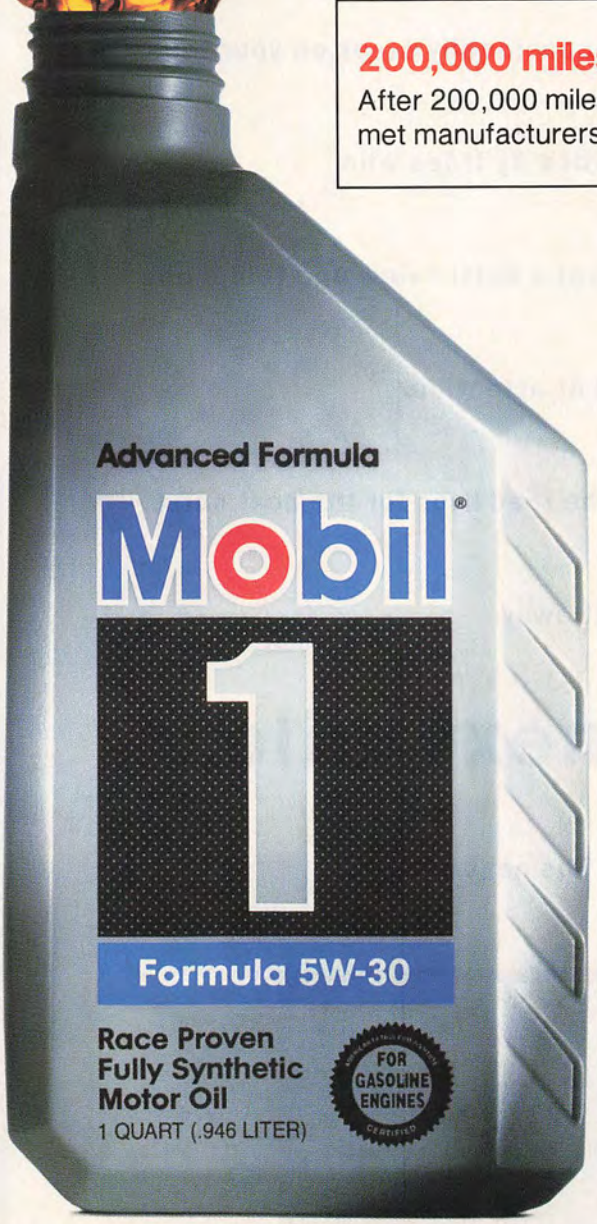

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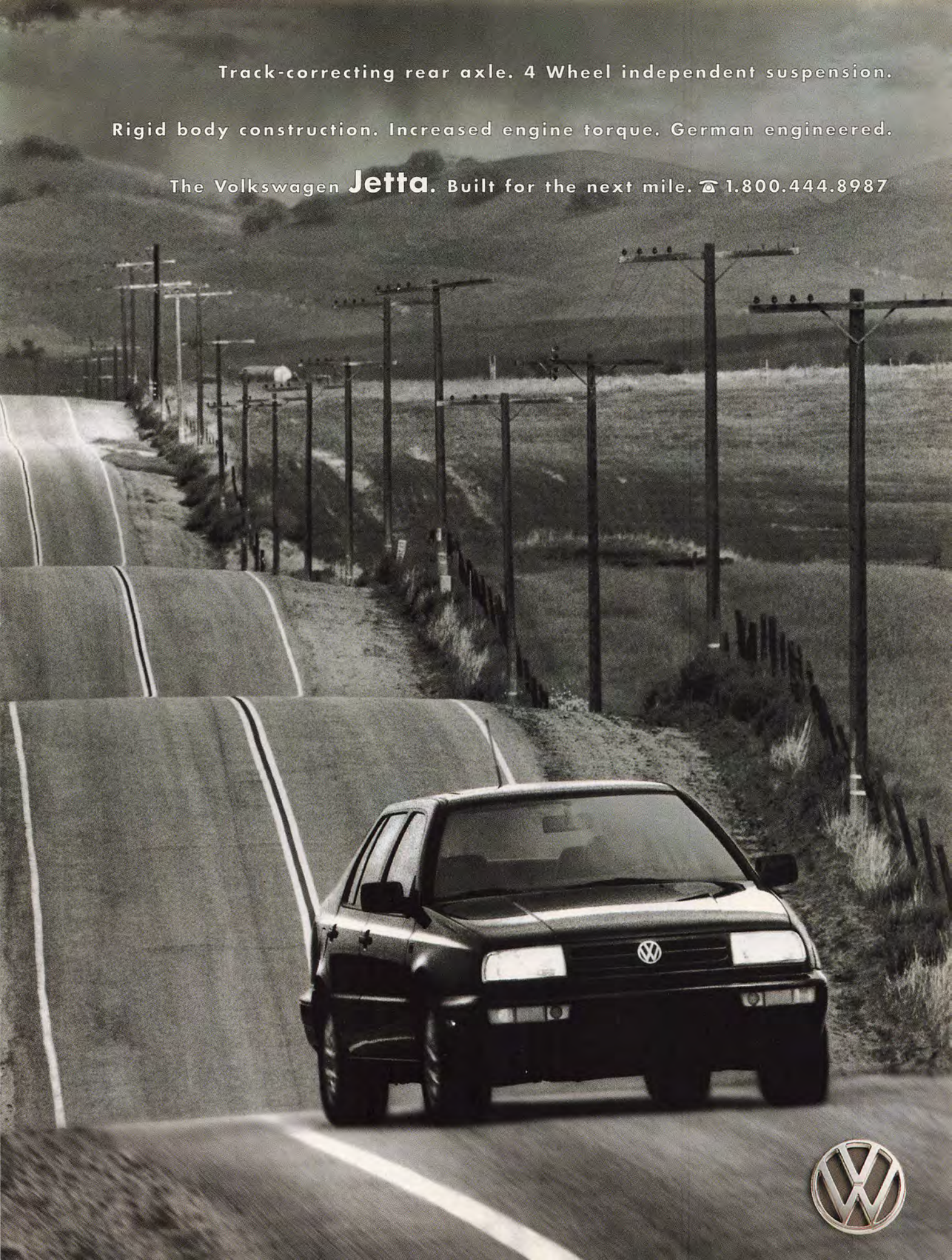
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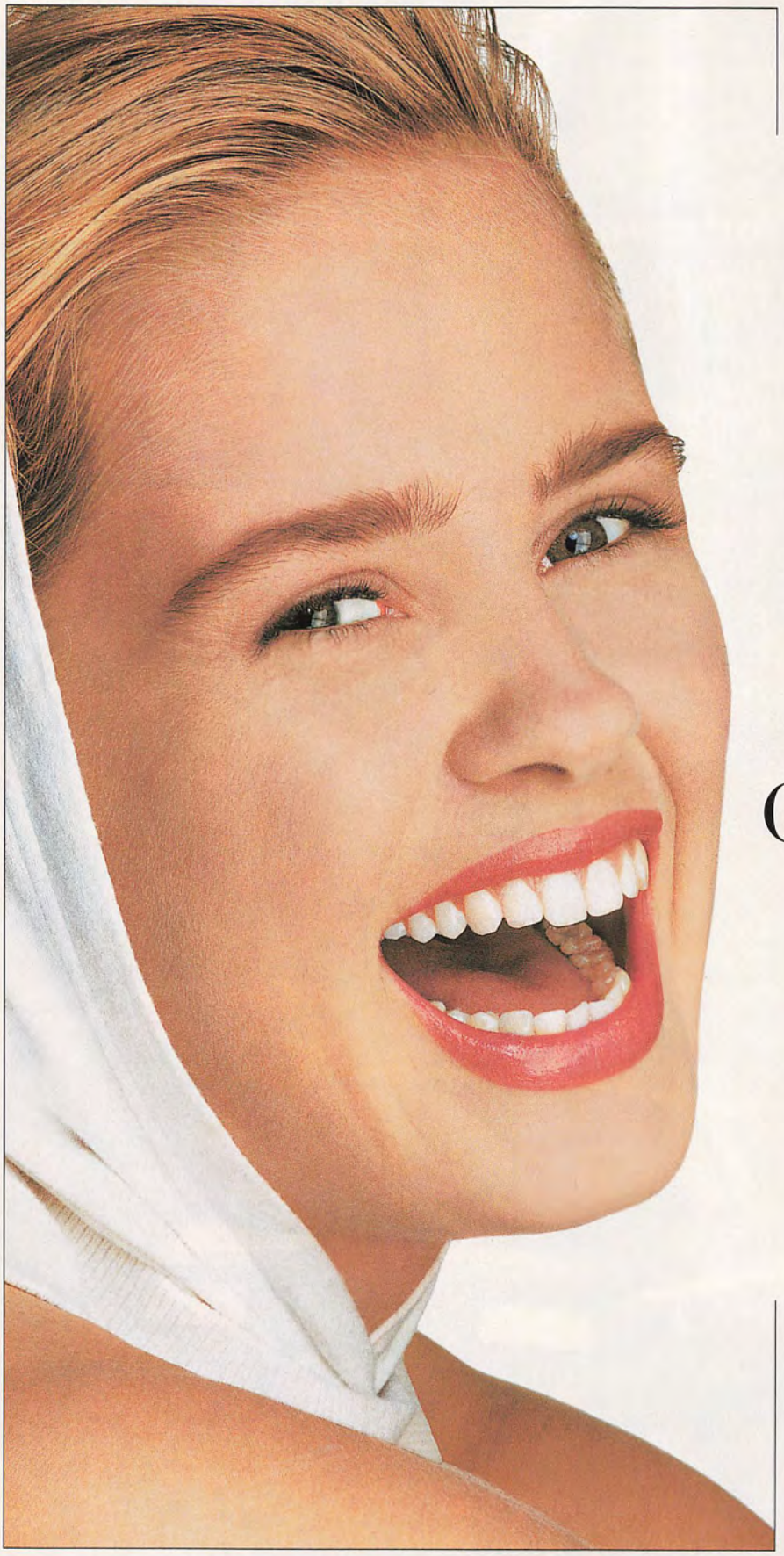

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I'm not in favor of shooting off a gun and seeing where things fall. Maybe we should take time and build on what we have."

No chance. For all its modesty, this is the hungry I. These are the minimum requirements for 1995–96 expansion teams: a 10,000-seat arena, a population base of one million and a $6 million franchise fee. Already Kalamazoo, Fort Wayne and Peoria, Ill.—"our Green Bays," new IHL commissioner Bob Ufer calls them—seem hopelessly small.

The IHL magic is not in its flashy pregame introductions—although Las Vegas Thunder players' bursting through an inflatable slot machine does have a certain cachet—but in its ticket prices. A family of four can get good seats, eats, parking and the requisite souvenirs for $90; that same package for an NHL Detroit Red Wing game would be around $175. Viper tickets range between $5 and $18; the Red Wings scale theirs between $15 and $43. Of course, there are other differences. For example, the Wings have Sergei Fedorov, the NHL's MVP, while the Vipers have Petr Sykora, an 18-year-old from the Czech Republic who is projected as the first pick in the 1995 NHL draft.

Then again, the Vipers are playing and the Red Wings are not. And in this era of fan alienation, the reassuring news for the Viper faithful is that they actually might be in the same tax bracket as the players they're watching. The average IHL salary is about $65,000, which is $500,000 below last season's NHL average. The IHL, during current negotiations for its own new collective bargaining agreement, has sought to include a unique clause: a provision that a large number of tickets in the big arenas will cost $10 or less. Such a provision reflects the fact that many of the league's movers and shakers don't want to move too far or shake too hard.

"I don't see us challenging the NHL," Ufer says. "It makes no sense. Why sign one player who'll double your payroll? We don't want to go the USFL route."

Yet it takes only one cold-weather Steinbrenner and. . . .

"I know the commissioner talks about controlled growth and being a complement to the NHL, but even if it's not in the grand plan, there's a certain inevitability to a far better IHL," says Viper president Tom Wilson, who is also president of the NBA Pistons. "I'm bullish on this league. Maybe one day we won't be content to be a minor league."

The Vipers have told their fans that they're going to have fun from the moment the players skate onto the ice through a giant snake head. In fact, the Vipers *guarantee* it—at least they did the first weekend. On opening night a league-record 20,182 tickets were sold. The next night an announced crowd of 18,248 became the second-largest in IHL history. For the weekend only 81 tickets were refunded as part of the money-back Satisfaction Guaranteed offer. So far the Vipers have missed only one marketing gag: While they did put defenseman Gord Hynes in jersey number 57, they somehow failed to have forward Miroslav Satan wear number 666.

The second-year Thunder had it all for its opener in Vegas last Friday: a crowd of 12,604; center Radek Bonk, the NHL's No. 3 draft choice in June, who returned to the I after failing to sign with the Ottawa Senators; Atlanta Brave pitcher Greg Maddux, a Las Vegas resident who had nothing better to do in October; third-string goalie Manon Rhéaume, hockey's first female pro; prospective employee McSorley dropping the first puck; and a 4–3 win over the San Diego Gulls. The tensest moment of the evening came during the national anthem when members of the 1950s singing group Lil Elmo and the Cosmos had to cover their foot-high pompadours with their hands when the fireworks went off.

In Atlanta's home opener on Saturday, the Knights skated onto the ice through a huge replica of the Turner Cup to celebrate winning last season's championship. The Knights beat the Houston Aeros 6–5 before 14,546 but didn't score on the designated power play that would have entitled each fan to a whole pizza for just $4.99.

"This is not the NHL," Adler says, "and we're aware that all the players really want to get to the next level."

Maybe now. But next year how will you keep them off the farm after they've played Par-ee? ■

Cheaper tickets mean more cash for Knight souvenirs.

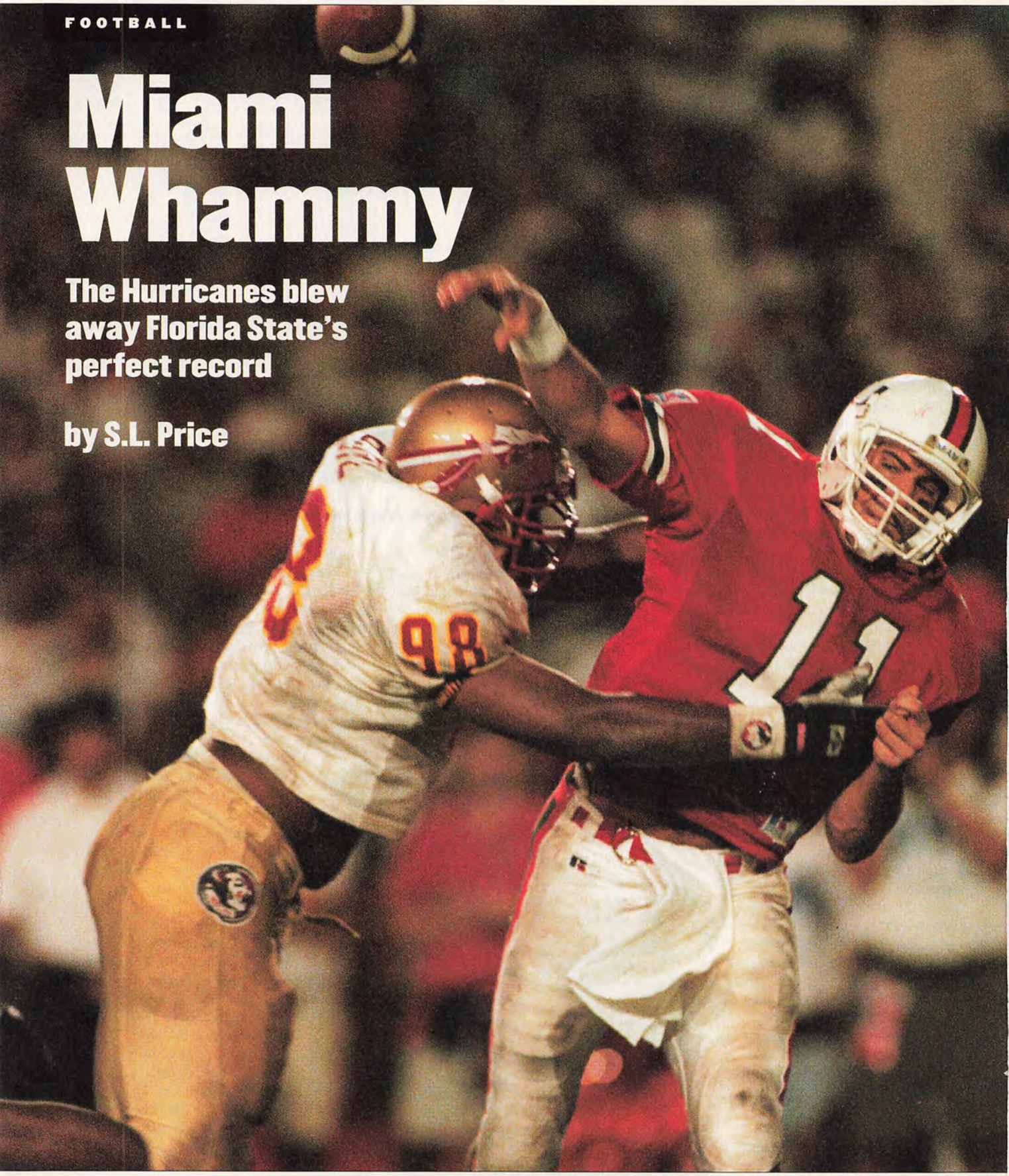
The Kings' McSorley, a guest in Vegas, may join the Thunder if the lockout continues.

JOHN W. MCDONOUGH

Miami Whammy

The Hurricanes blew away Florida State's perfect record

by S.L. Price



IT WAS the worst year. Football fell apart: There was the loss in Tallahassee, and then coach Dennis Erickson benched him, and then the '93 season went up in flames and blame rained down on Frank Costa like ashes. And he started to believe it all, every bad thing said about him: Costa had let the University of Miami down; Costa didn't deserve to wear a Hurricane uniform; Costa was no good. He would hear the words in his head early, before the sun rose, and they would push him from his bed. "I wake up and I'm not going back to sleep," he says. "I'm pacing the halls of my apartment. I don't know what time it is. I get something to eat." Sometimes he would drive. Once he cruised I-95, barely seeing the other cars or the brightening sky. He wandered 125 miles before it hit him: I've got to get back to Miami.

Maybe somewhere else college football is merely a game. But at Miami, four national titles and two Heisman trophies and that just-ended 58-game home winning streak have made it into something much more powerful and cruel. This is a place for success, and nothing but. Costa knows. Before last Saturday he had been among South Florida's most reviled figures—a struggling quarterback at Quarterback U, the man who triggered Miami's demise. Precisely a year ago, Costa had presided over the loss to Florida State that marked the beginning of a downward slide for the Hurricanes. Now the No. 3 Seminoles had come to the Orange Bowl to finish what they had started.

Who had confidence in him now? Some Hurricanes past and present were questioning his leadership. Former Miami defensive tackle Mark Caesar sniped, "You can't win with a high school quarterback." One day last week Costa was riding in his car with two teammates. "Hey," Costa said, "how much you want to bet I turn on the radio and they're ripping me right now?" No way, they said. Costa turned it on. Then they all listened as the radio guys ripped him apart.

Maybe somewhere else it is just a game, but on Saturday it was Florida State–Miami in the Orange Bowl and Frank Costa exacting his perfect revenge. For of all the criticisms leveled at him, none was more damaging than the one questioning Costa's ability to engineer scores under pressure. Yet against his greatest nemesis, in a showdown both teams considered key to national-title hopes, Costa led the Hurricanes on a 34–20 stomping of the defending national champions—and restored more than one reputation in the process.

Funny. But if any name has placed second in the Great Miami Trashing Expo this year, it's Erickson's. Despite his two national titles and a winning percentage that his predecessor, Jimmy Johnson, would envy, Erickson has been lambasted almost as severely as Costa. Coming into the weekend, the Hurricanes had lost five of their previous eight games against ranked teams—compared with five losses in the previous 72 such meetings—and the pressure to produce had linked Erickson and the quarterback he once benched. On Thursday, Erickson joked to Costa, "We're the most popular guys in the city, eh?" and Costa replied, "Yeah, we make a pretty good team."

As it turned out, they did. On Saturday the Hurricanes pieced together as complete a performance as they have in years, limiting Florida State to 47 yards rushing and forcing Seminole coach Bobby Bowden to run through three quarterbacks without success, while Erickson's much-maligned one-back offense chewed up 185 yards on the ground. Costa, meanwhile, went 18 for 32 for 177 yards and proved himself by coolly orchestrating five scoring drives, including one 12-play, 89-yard march in the second quarter that put Miami ahead to stay. After it was over, after Erickson had run off the field flinging his arms to the night sky, he wrapped Costa in a tight hug and said to his quarterback, "We did it. How does it feel?"

While Costa (11) showed poise under fire, defenders like Twan Russell stuffed the Seminoles.

"It's the greatest feeling I've ever had," Costa said.

"I've just never been happier in my life," Erickson said.

Believe them. For Costa and Erickson and the Miami program, this was a critical night. On Sept. 24 Miami's NCAA-record home winning streak died in a punishing loss to Washington while Florida State raised its record to 4–0. "They lost a lot of their mystique when they finally got beat down there," Bowden said before last week's game. Florida State quarterback Danny Kanell seemed to be stepping into Charlie Ward's shoes with ease; he'd av-

Photographs by Al Tielemans

eraged 308 passing yards in his five career starts and had never lost a game. After Florida State beat Miami last year—and went on to win Bowden's long-awaited national championship—there was a sense that the Seminoles had assumed Miami's once-dominant persona. "Florida State doesn't think they can win," said Seminole linebacker Derrick Brooks. "Florida State *expects* to win. That's just the feeling we have now."

Of course, Florida State has often come to the Orange Bowl thinking that way. And such is the topsy-turvy nature of this, the best current rivalry in college football, that neither side can afford to expect anything but trouble. The Seminoles haven't won a regular-season game in the Orange Bowl in a decade. Saturday, it seemed as if nothing had changed. "We came to dominate," says Miami all-everything defensive tackle Warren Sapp, who did just that by bagging eight tackles, 1½ sacks and batting away two passes. "I can't recall a time we played like this. For a total game? We smacked 'em tonight."

And no one suffered more than Kanell. Following the example of Ward, who threw three interceptions and was sacked seven times in his first venture into the Orange Bowl, Kanell fired three mistakes that led to interceptions and was sacked twice. Bowden yanked Kanell in the third quarter after Carlos Jones scored with a pickoff that made the score 31–17 to seal the win. That was the role reversal Florida State least expected. Last year Seminole strong safety Devin Bush picked off a Costa fourth-quarter offering and returned it for a touchdown, and Costa did not start again for the last seven games of the season. Suddenly the questions have shifted to Tallahassee. Can Kanell lead Florida State in a big game?

JOHN BIEVER

Under siege, Kanell (top) threw three interceptions, one of which Carlos Jones (12) ran in for a TD.

"I just wanted to get in his face as many times as we could," Sapp said after Saturday's game. "From the first snap he took, you could see he had happy feet. He was back there hopping around. He had tunnel vision: I've got to get the ball right there, right now. You could see he was unsure about decision making. . . . We knew we had to go get him."

And Kanell aside, how much resilience does this FSU team possess? "I saw the quit in their eyes, and when I saw that, I knew we had them," says Miami safety Malcolm Pearson. "That play Carlos Jones made—that broke their back. That was the end of their confidence."

While Bowden turned to replacements Jon Stark and Thad Busby, a serene Costa picked his way through the Seminole defense. Helped in no small measure by the running of James Stewart (95 yards, two touchdowns) and Danyell Ferguson and Larry Jones (124 yards, combined), Costa completed his first four passes and led the Hurricanes 80 yards for a touchdown on their second possession. Then, with the score tied at 14 in the second quarter, Costa started at his own 11 and threw three completions in an 11-play drive that set up the go-ahead touchdown. Backup quarterback Ryan Collins came in to get the TD on a pass to Derrick Harris off the option. Last season Collins took over when Costa went to the bench, and tension built. This time Costa was the first to congratulate Collins coming off the field. It was that kind of night.

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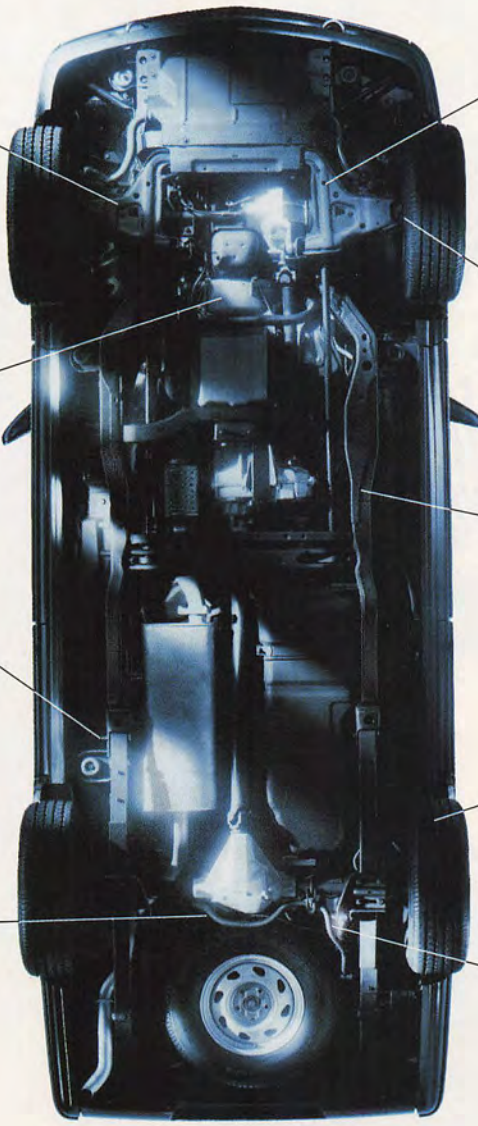

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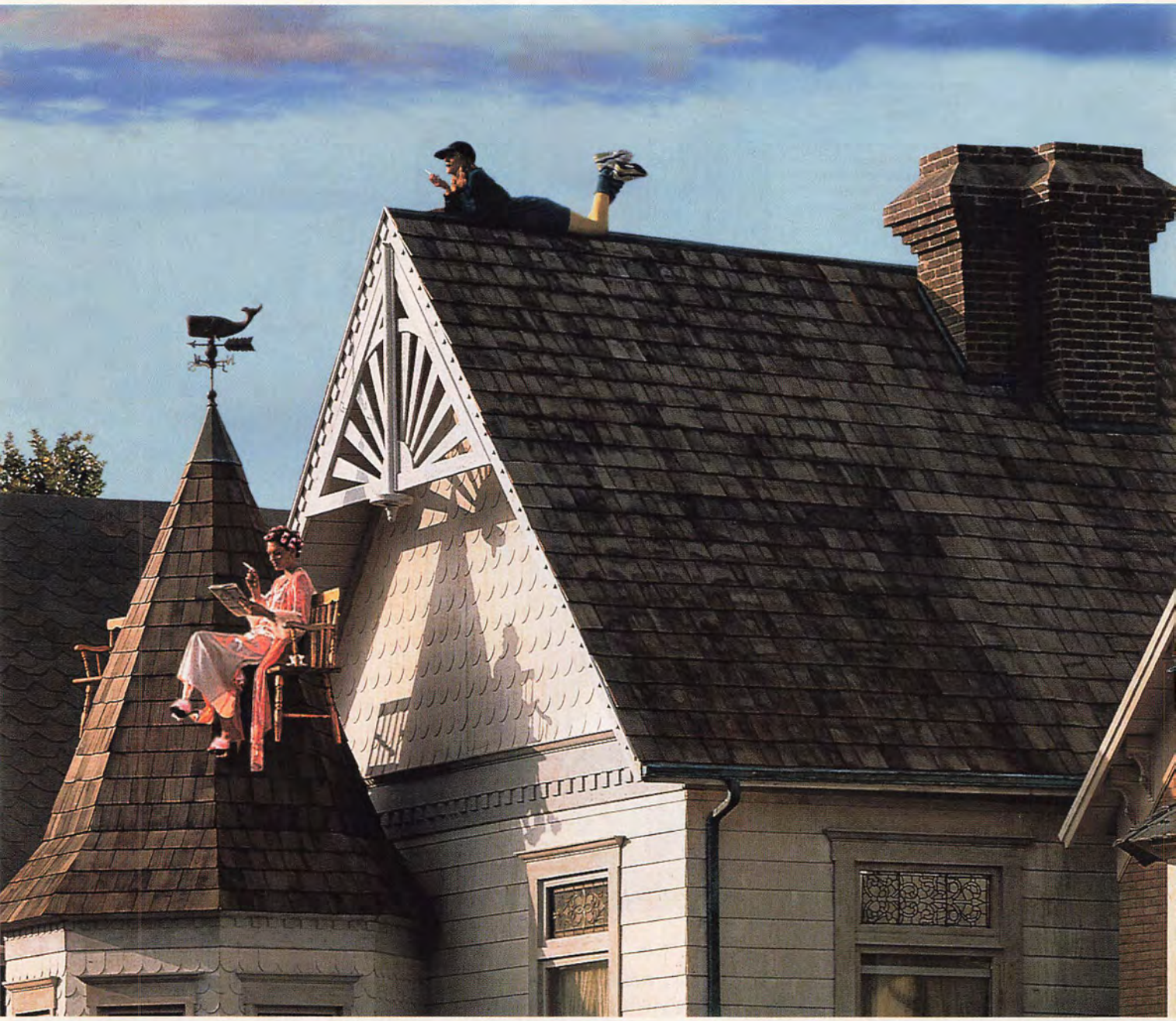

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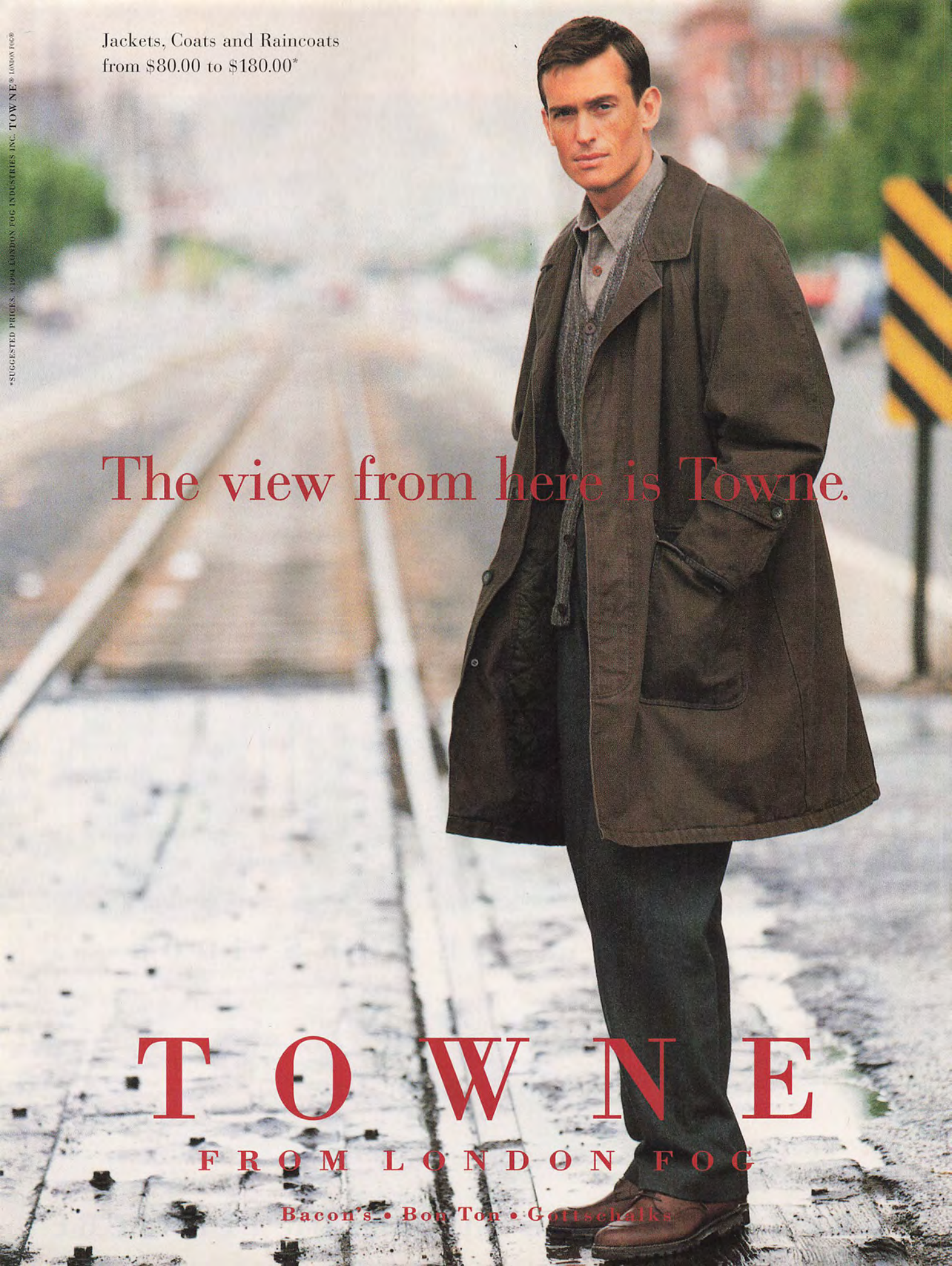
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"Frank stepped up," says Miami wide receiver Chris T. Jones. "Frank showed everyone he can be one of the best quarterbacks here. They didn't rattle him at all. They came at him, and he showed that he's the leader."

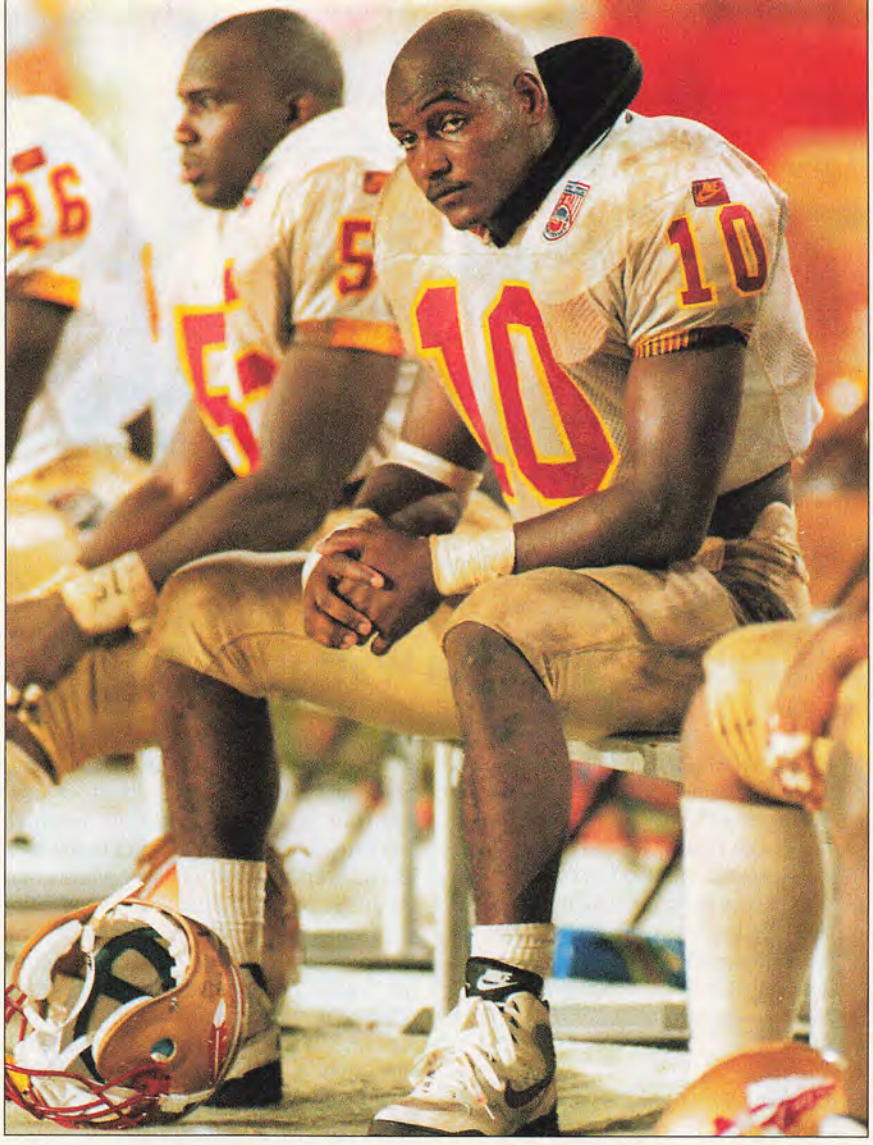
Like his teammates, Costa didn't step up against Arizona when he came in after the first quarter of the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 1, and he didn't step up against Washington this fall. But to beat Florida State so convincingly when few thought it could be done creates instant respect. "I'm extremely happy for him," Erickson says. "He's been through a lot of things, and he's come through like a champion."

It's true that Costa went through plenty, and football may have been the least of it. Last year was "a nightmare year," Costa will tell you, but the damage began long before football season. On Valentine's Day 1993, a childhood friend from his South Philadelphia neighborhood, Kevin Libucki, was killed when he was hit by a drunken driver as he strolled along a sidewalk. Then another friend Costa had known since he was six, Dominic Menitti, died after being shot in the chest. Then came the worst Miami season in a decade, and Costa would find himself buttonholed by every barstool coach in Dade County. "It'd go from a guy trying to be nice, saying, 'What happened against Florida State?' to 'I lost a lot of money,' to some drunk in a bar saying, 'You suck,' " Costa says. "It got so tough on me mentally that after a while it wasn't hurting me just as a player, it was hurting me off the field."

He lost 20 pounds. He considered transferring. He called his parents, Frank Sr. and Rosemarie, nightly. "Unless it happens to you, you can never imagine," says Frank Sr., who drives a bus at the Philadelphia Naval Base. "You get a kid and all his dreams go away real fast, and when it happens, you don't know how to combat it. You think all crazy thoughts. It was horrible for him. Here we are, 1,100 miles away; how far can you reach out to him?"

But after the season, Costa decided to stay at Miami. Although Erickson gave him no guarantee except that he would have a shot at the starting job in spring practice, Costa figured he would spend his senior season fighting. "I told my parents, 'I'm not coming back to Philly.' I don't think I'm hated down here . . . but if I am, I am."

Now, Costa says, he's stronger. "I'm not the same person mentally I was last year," he says. "I don't let things bother me anymore. I don't care what people say."



The dismay evinced by Brooks (10) was in marked contrast to the joy shared by Erickson and Costa.

JOHN BIEVER

Frank Sr. says his son is "calloused" now, which is not to say that he's incapable of feelings. Saturday, Costa was the last one to leave the Hurricane locker room. He walked out of the empty Orange Bowl looking like any 22-year-old—black-and-red-checked shirt, tail out, baseball cap on backward—and joined the family and friends from Philly who had waited one bad year for Costa, *this* Costa, to appear.

"He took a beating down here from everybody, newswriters, magazines—everyone buried him," says Frank Sr. "But he kept it to himself. He took punishment from everywhere. Was it just? I don't know."

For the moment, it wasn't important. Costa called to his dad, and father and son shook hands, and that dissolved into the quarterback's second strong hug of the night. Frank Sr. said something only his boy could hear, and then the moment was over as friends waded in to speak to them both. "Hey," Costa yelled to somebody, "where are we going now?"

Not that it mattered. Every place is flawless on top of the world. ■

Twice Is Doubly Nice

Boston College beat Notre Dame for the second straight year, this time with ease • by John Walters

WHAT UNHOLY thoughts must have occupied the minds of the players on Notre Dame's field goal defense unit upon seeing kicker David Gordon line up for a 33-yard attempt with Boston College trailing 3–0 early in the second quarter last Saturday in the Eagles' Alumni Stadium?

That pipsqueak stole our national title?

Definitely.

It's not roughing the kicker if you block the kick?

Perhaps.

Watch out for the fake?

Doubtful.

"We knew they were dying to block it after last year," said Boston College sophomore Matt Hasselbeck, who, in his only collegiate play so far, lined up as Gordon's holder, then ran eight yards for a first down, providing the leap of faith that fueled BC's 30–11 thrashing of the Irish.

"Football's a game of momentum," said Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz. "The momentum stayed one way after that."

Unlike last November's wild game in South Bend—which ended up 41–39 on a 41-yard Gordon boot as time expired, an outcome that toppled the Irish from their No. 1 ranking—Holy War '94 will not be remembered for one play. Though the fake field goal (code-named Leprechaun) led to a touchdown one play later, the fake simply served notice that on this day the Eagles were the better team. "What gets assumed is that when somebody puts on an ND uniform, he's a better football player," said BC offensive tackle Pete Kendall. "That's not necessarily the case."

It had been the case for almost three years—at least when the Irish uniform was white. Since a 35–13 loss at Penn State in November 1991, Notre Dame had won 16 straight games on the road. And not since 1987, again in Happy Valley, had the Irish lost an away game to an unranked team. "Louie is Zeus, and Notre Dame is a mythological giant," said Eagle coach Dan Henning before Saturday's game, but his players were having none of it. "We knew if we could do our jobs, we'd drop the hammer on them," said junior defensive end Mike Mamula.

Still, early in the fourth quarter the Eagles were ahead 24–3 and, thus, right where Notre Dame wanted them. BC had entered the final period last year with a 21-point lead and squandered that. This time when Irish tailback Randy Kinder scored on a 15-yard run and quarterback Ron Powlus hooked up with Derrick Mayes for the two-point conversion, narrowing the Eagle lead to 24–11, 11:59 remained. "Were we worried?" asked BC linebacker Stephen Boyd. "Not with this defense." Especially not with Mamula, who sacked Powlus twice and spearheaded a front seven that hounded him into a 5-for-21, two-interception performance.

BC's win further heated up a rivalry that is as amicable as it is fervent, witness the public-address announcement in the game's waning moments. It was an invitation unlike any other to be heard in Division I-A: "There will be a Mass after the game in Gasson Hall at four o'clock . . . followed by cocktails at 5:45." ■

DAMIAN STROHMEYER

Justice Smith, who rushed for 147 yards, and the rest of the Eagles left Notre Dame grabbing at air.

51
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JOHN MILLER/AP

Shawn Parnell (15) and the Wildcats had reason to be down, unlike Justin Shull, who scored the Rams' first TD.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Dust In the Wind

Colorado State took Arizona's Desert Swarm by storm

by Tim Layden

A NATIONAL championship wasn't lost in the desert last Saturday night, it was only imperiled. As Warner Smith, a senior offensive guard for Arizona, said the morning after a 21–16 loss to Colorado State tore a gaping hole in the Wildcats' title dream, "The season isn't in the tank quite yet, but it's definitely a dark day around here."

Upsets have become October's theme in college football. September's theme was inexplicable blowouts, which seemed to establish a super elite in the rankings. Now Michigan has been beaten (miraculously, but nonetheless beaten); Miami, beaten; Florida State, beaten; and Nebraska, wounded. Arizona simply fell into line—and fell to 4–1.

"We had a lot of goals this year," says Tedy Bruschi, the junior defensive end and a member of the Wildcats' scarred Desert Swarm defense. "Colorado State just got us."

And then reveled in the accomplishment. The Rams flew home on Sunday morning and, dressed in their green-and-gold sweats, proudly strode through Denver's Stapleton Airport. There were cheers of recognition at the airport and more cheers on I-25, where cars honked their horns in celebration as the team buses headed north to Fort Collins. More than 250 students and fans greeted the players upon their arrival on campus.

And why not? Colorado State is 6–0 for the first time in 69 years and is ranked 13th in the country. (And its victory over Arizona ran the Western Athletic Conference's record against the Pac-10 to a stunning 6–2.) The Rams are vastly improved over last year, when they went 5–6, but beating the Wildcats was a delightful surprise for a school whose coach, Sonny Lubick, regretted having shown his team a tape of the Wildcats' 29–0 romp over Miami in last year's Fiesta Bowl. "We watched it, and I thought, Gee, that was stupid," says Lubick. "I didn't think we had a great shot at them."

For Arizona, two problems were evident.

• Poor adapting to the upper crust. "Here we are on the cover of SPORTS ILLUSTRATED [as preseason No. 1]; people are calling us a great team," says Bruschi. "Everybody starts shooting for you. It makes me understand what teams like Miami and Florida State go through every week."

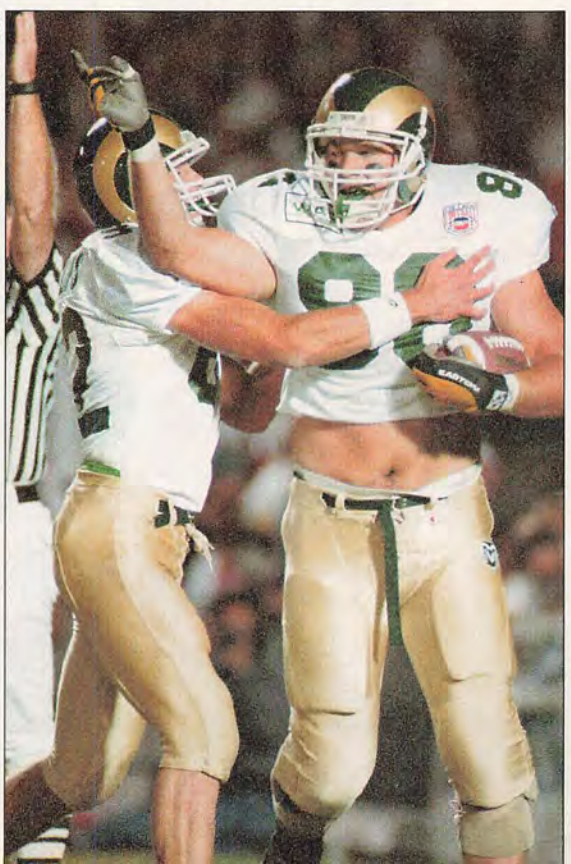
• No game-breaking plays from a still-toothless offense and no game-saving plays from the renowned defense. Six second-half Arizona drives that reached at least midfield resulted in only 10 points. "We could not make a play that counted," said Wildcat coach Dick Tomey.

"I should have forced a fumble or made a big play on defense," said Bruschi. Ironically, it was Colorado State that did. In the third quarter, with Arizona trailing 14–6, quarterback Dan White handed off the ball on second-and-one, but Ram linebacker Garrett Sand knocked it loose. Defensive end Sean Moran scooped up the fumble and returned it 77 yards for the killing score. More ominous for Arizona, teams appear to be catching up with the Wildcats' double-eagle-flex defense.

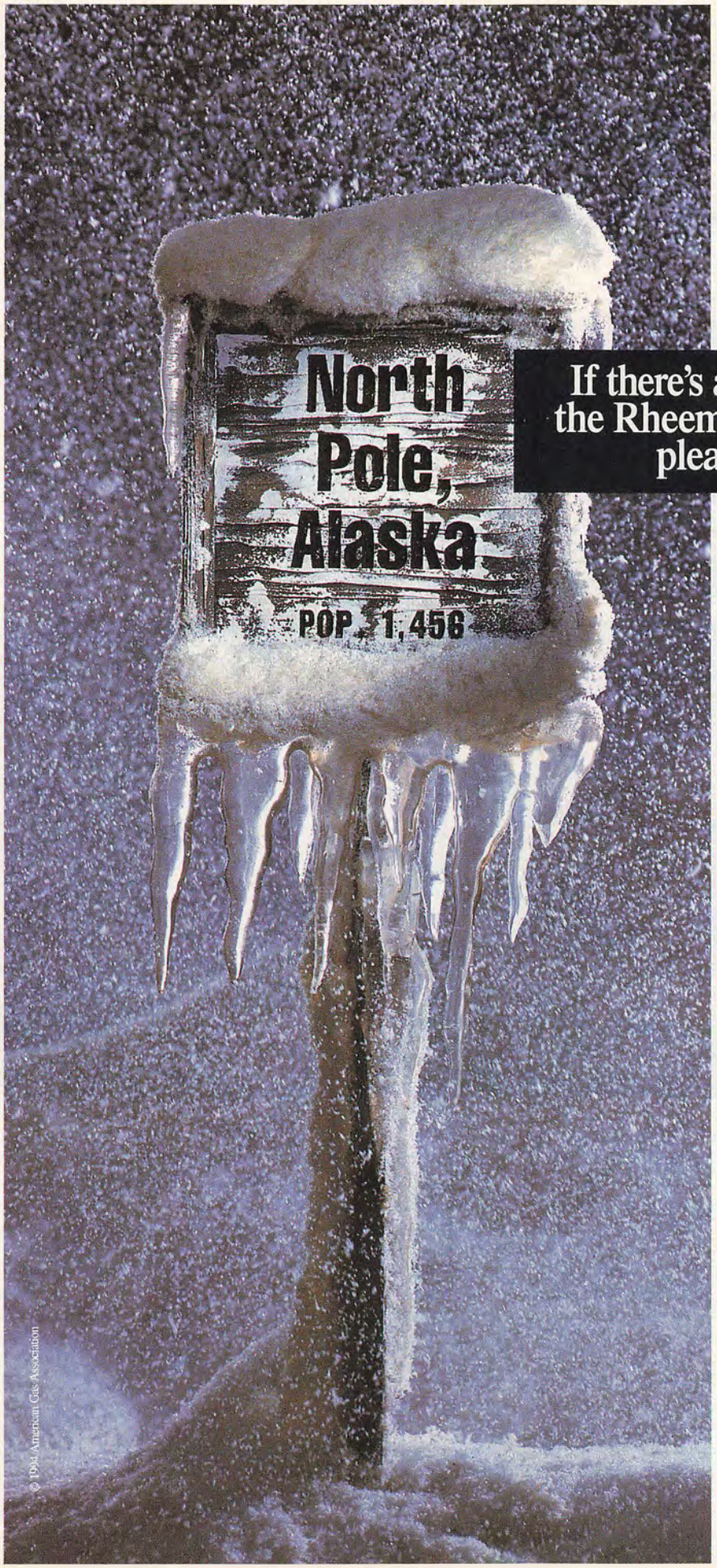
But there is scant time to mourn. Arizona plays at 4–1 Washington State on Saturday. "Good teams bounce back," Tomey said.

There will be plenty of opportunity to test Tomey's theory. Look at the schedule: Penn State at Michigan (Saturday), Nebraska at Kansas State (Saturday), Auburn at Florida (Saturday), Colorado at Nebraska (Oct. 29), Miami at Syracuse (Nov. 5), Notre Dame versus Florida State in Orlando (Nov. 12), Florida at Florida State (Nov. 26).

Lots of dark days and lots of bounce-backs. It's your next theme. ■



JOHN MILLER/AP



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Bluegrass

It has been a grim year at Kentucky, where a player was murdered and the coach's wife threatened

by William F. Reed

THIS IS how the police think it happened: At about 2:40 a.m. on Sunday, July 17, a gunman, crouched behind bushes, peered through the scope of a high-powered rifle and took aim. The target, some 100 yards away, was a bulky figure sitting in a brown leather chair on the front porch of the blue two-story frame house at 570 Woodland Avenue, just off the campus of the University of Kentucky in Lexington. Suddenly the quiet of the warm summer night was shattered by the rifle's crack. The bullet hit the man on the porch in the left ear, killing him instantly.

The victim was Trent DiGiuro, an honor student and Wildcat football player who was in line to be a starting offensive guard this fall. The murder occurred as a party for DiGiuro's 21st birthday was winding down. Some players were there, and everything had been mellow—until the shot. "It was such a relaxed atmosphere that you can't imagine something crazy like that happening," said quarterback Antonio O'Ferral, one of four players, including DiGiuro, who had rented the house for the summer.

Sean Mann, a Kentucky senior who is not on the football team, was sitting about seven feet away from DiGiuro when he was hit. "I heard a shot, and that was pretty much it," Mann says. No one at the party saw an assailant or tried to look for one. "We were more concerned with Trent," Mann says.

Later that morning coach Bill Curry, who had just returned from a vacation in Britain, learned of the killing and went to the house on Woodland Avenue. The body, of course, had been removed. But looking at the porch Curry noticed something that made him ill. All he could say was, "Let's clean this up." With that the coach found a bucket and brush, then dropped to his knees to scrub Trent DiGiuro's blood off the wooden planks.

The Wildcats had an open date last Saturday, and no team in the nation was more in need of time off. Their record is 1–4 after a

RON GARRISON/LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER (CENTER AND OPPOSITE PAGE); DAVID COYLE (LEFT); PATRICK MURPHY-RACEY

Blues

41–14 humiliation by Auburn on Sept. 29, but Curry, who has not had a winning record in four seasons at UK, insists that this squad has talent. If so, then how do you explain the 73–7 waxing by Florida on Sept. 10 or the 59–29 blowout by Indiana a week later, games that constituted Kentucky's worst back-to-back losses since the university began playing football in 1881?

There are any number of explanations: The team lacks depth and experience in both lines, it doesn't have a consistent quarterback, and the linebacking is shaky. But all that seemed almost incidental last week when the already dark saga of Kentucky football grew even more sinister. Last Wednesday the university announced that Curry's wife, Carolyn, had been the object of a death threat that had been called in to the football office the weekend after the Auburn game. The call reportedly may have come from a gambler who was enraged that UK had allowed Auburn to recover a late onsides kick then score a touchdown, which enabled the Tigers to cover the 23-point spread.

Curry, who, following the Auburn game, had a Monday-night speaking engagement in Atlanta, didn't hear the tape of the threat until Tuesday. That night Curry took his wife and his son, Billy, a graduate assistant on the Kentucky staff, to the Lexington airport and put them on a plane. Carolyn, who has been married to Bill for more than 30 years, is a part-time instructor at Kentucky who hated to leave her home and her job. But Curry was insistent, at least partly because of the possibility of a connection between the death threat and the DiGiuro case, a possibility police say they have discounted.

"I have to consider [the murder] because it happened," he said. "That was the reason I acted so strongly. In the absence of that, I might have responded differently. But it did happen."

On the morning before DiGiuro was killed, Dennis Sprague, Kentucky's team psychologist, ran into the player in the weight room, where he had been working during the summer under strength coach Mike Florence. A 6′ 2″, 277-pound junior-to-be, DiGiuro told Sprague that he was so fired up about his chances of being a starter that he had asked Florence to give him some new conditioning exercises. "He also told me he was excited about his birthday party that night," Sprague says.

DiGiuro was the sort of player who warms a coach's heart. He came to Kentucky as a walk-on in 1991, moved up to the scout team in 1992, and last season played in seven games as a backup offensive guard. Last spring DiGiuro was finally promoted to the first team. Besides that, DiGiuro, a business major, was one of 14 Kentucky players to make the SEC Academic Honor Roll last season.

By all accounts he was one of the hardest workers on the team, both on the practice field and in the weight room. "We called him Traps because of his massive neck [trapezius] muscles," says Robert Stinson, a co-captain and defensive tackle. DiGiuro could bench-press 435 pounds, the best on the team.

DiGiuro came from an upper-middle-class family in the Louisville suburb of Goshen, where he was a popular student. Sharalea Sampson, now a Kentucky senior, had known DiGiuro since the first grade; in high school she and Trent were homecoming queen and king. In her room she still has a photo of them together.

"He was like a big brother to me," she says. "He was a very huggable, very gentle person. All of us from high school had a really close bond. It's just so shocking. I've never seen him around anybody who was mean."

"He was a real laid-back guy," says Mann, who met DiGiuro during the player's freshman year. "Ever since this happened, I haven't been able to come up with a reason. I wish I could, to help the police and a lot of people who probably want to feel safe. But there's nothing."

However, it is equally hard for any of DiGiuro's friends to come up with an explanation for an episode that happened on

Players became pallbearers after DiGiuro (67) was shot on his porch; now Curry (with Carolyn) has had to take recent threats seriously.

Sept. 25, 1992, when DiGiuro was involved in a brawl at the University Club near the campus. According to court records, DiGiuro, who was described as "very intoxicated," punched a patron and threw a beer pitcher at him. On his way out of the bar DiGiuro picked up another student and threw him against a wall, breaking his leg. He then pushed a girl over some tables.

Up the street a few minutes later, DiGiuro continued his rampage at a convenience store. The owner, Mike Smith, heard a noise in the parking lot and went outside, where he saw DiGiuro pick up a newspaper vending machine and smash it on the hood of Smith's car. When Smith approached DiGiuro, the football player put his fist through the driver's side window, then picked up Smith and threw him on the car hood. As the six-foot, 200-pound Smith told the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, "He was extremely, extremely violent. He picked me up like a feather. I was afraid of his eyes."

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

A month later DiGiuro was convicted of second-degree criminal mischief, put on six months probation and ordered to pay $2,500 to Smith for his medical and car-repair bills, which he did. The student with the broken leg filed a suit that DiGiuro's parents settled out of court.

In January 1993, DiGiuro was in trouble again. He was reportedly involved in the theft of some clothes from a Louisville department store; though it was a violation of his probation, he was not assessed further punishment. "He had a rough couple of months there," his father, Michael, told the *Herald-Leader* after his son's death, "but he was working so hard to put it behind him."

Uncharacteristic violent behavior is often interpreted as a tip-off to steroid use, but Sprague, the team psychologist, doesn't believe that was the case with DiGiuro. "Trent basically told me that these things happened and that alcohol was involved," Sprague says. "My impression was that he wasn't on steroids, because he didn't have the classic symptoms. He was just one of those kids who went into the weight room and worked his butt off." Police searched the house after the murder and found no evidence of any drugs.

DiGiuro's murder came 15 months after another Kentucky walk-on, Ted Presley, had died from a gunshot wound that was apparently inflicted in a game of Russian roulette in his dorm room. That tragedy had hit the players hard, and the DiGiuro case left them reeling. "This was a lot harder for me," O'Ferral said, "because I actually saw it—my friend dead with blood gushing out of his head."

When practice began in August, Curry noticed a distinct somberness among his players. Once he even stopped practice so he could talk to them about dealing with their grief. He then decided not to bring it up again because almost every player had already shared their tears and fears during sessions with Sprague and other counselors the school brought in. "Everybody has done a lot of soul-searching about a lot of things," Sprague says. "It [the death of a teammate] can have a cumulative effect on how people view life, sport and how they perform."

The bizarre deaths of Presley and Trumbo had already rocked Kentucky players.

The parents of one player were so distraught that Curry had to convince them it was safe for their son to practice. They were worried that a madman might be bent on killing football players.

The players pulled themselves together enough to grind out an opening 20–14 victory over Louisville on Sept. 3. Afterward Curry walked into the locker room with three game balls, which would be distributed to the families of DiGiuro, Presley and Troy Trumbo, a Kentucky baseball player who died last summer after a rare reaction to medications he was taking for back pain and a cold. But before Curry could say a word, O'Ferral jumped onto a bench and asked for his teammates' attention. "How about a moment of silence," O'Ferral said, "for my man T.D." And with that the players dissolved. It was a catharsis, the first time they had been able to grieve together. "I've never heard such sobbing in my life," Curry says. "Some of them were on the floor, crying unashamedly."

Following a recent practice, Curry, an introspective and religious man, sat in the lobby of the team's training facility, near where one of DiGiuro's number 67 jerseys is enshrined in a display case. "I know it's changed me," he says of the murder. "I remember being at the funeral and seeing all those big shoulders as they stared at the casket. At that moment they were dealing with their own mortality for the first time. I'm sure there's still something in there, inside the team, but I don't understand it, and I don't know if it's had anything to do with our performance."

DAVID COYLE

A few days later the Wildcats were crushed by Auburn. Soon thereafter the death threat was made against Curry's wife.

The murderer of Trent DiGiuro is still at large. The police seem to have no leads. They are seeking to question four males who apparently had pulled up to the house

TONY BENNETT/at work

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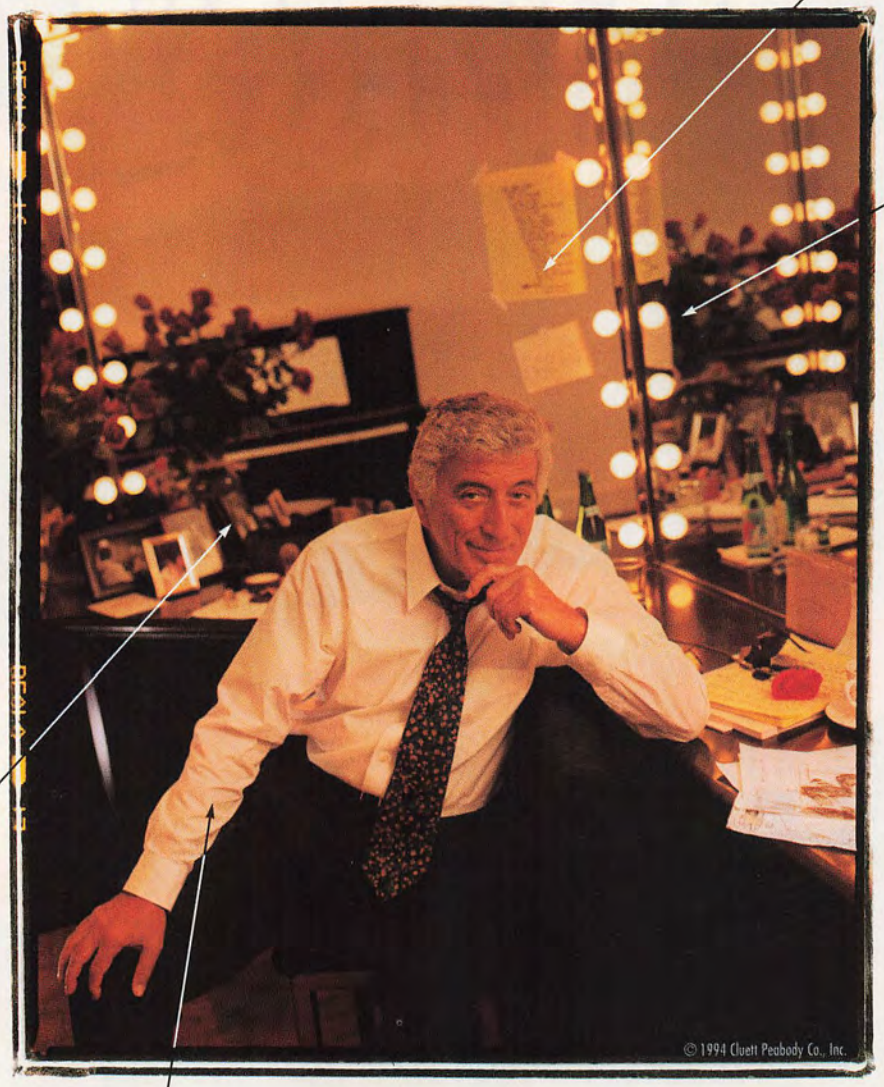

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The flowers are a
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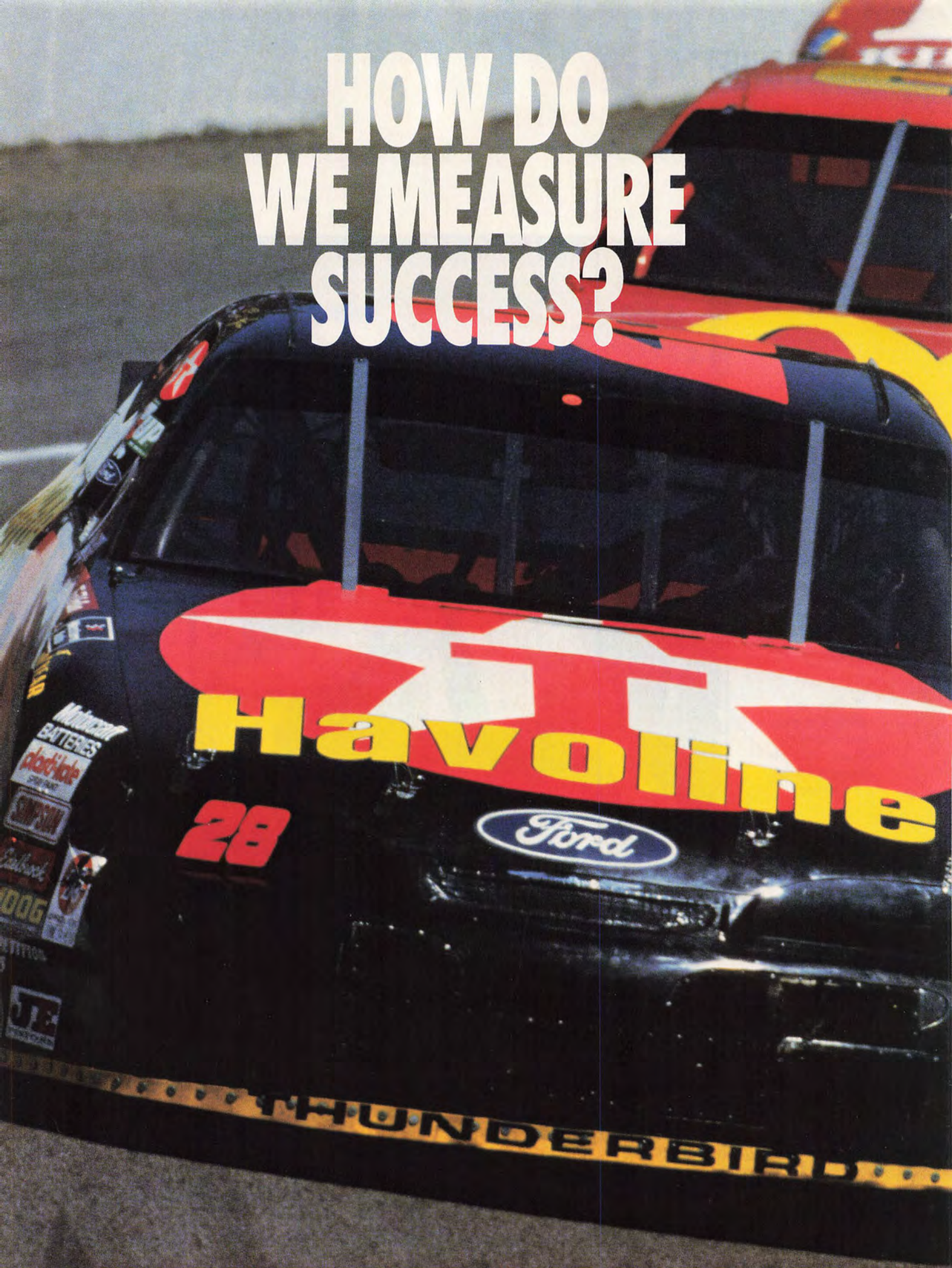
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Kings: 16 mg "tar," 1.1 mg nicotine—av. per cigarette by FTC method.

PATRICK MURPHY-RACEY

earlier in the evening in what was thought to be a late-model Nissan truck. About 20 minutes before the shooting the same group stopped again in front of the house and, police say, DiGiuro went out to talk to them briefly before they drove away. However, according to Mann, the friend nearest DiGiuro when the shooting occurred, "The story about a truck doesn't hold any weight—there wasn't any trouble." Mann says the truck did not stop the second time it passed the house, and that DiGiuro never left the porch.

Lexington police chief Larry Walsh says evidence indicates that the slaying was the work of a skilled marksman, though not necessarily a hired assassin. "Somebody really knew what they were doing," he says. The gun that killed DiGiuro has not been recovered. From their analysis of the wound and the victim's position, investigators theorize that the shot came from a rifle, probably from 100 yards away.

But why would somebody want to kill Trent DiGiuro? Could he have been involved in some unsavory situation? So far, Walsh says, police have been unable to find a motive. They have found no evidence that DiGiuro was involved with drugs or that he had any gambling debts. They have also checked out the victims of DiGiuro's earlier rampage and ruled out revenge as a motive. In the wake of the murder the campus and the community have been awash in rumors. Could the target have been somebody else? One of DiGiuro's housemates, quarterback Jeff Speedy, is the son of a Secret Service agent, so some have wondered, Could Speedy have been the target? Did somebody in DiGiuro's family have an enemy angry enough to take out his rage on Trent? The police have found nothing to substantiate any such notions.

The mystery haunts the players. Says senior offensive tackle Mark Askin, who played beside DiGiuro in the line and was a pallbearer at the funeral, "When you think about it, it gets to you. There was no reason for his death." But if someone indeed took careful aim and delivered the deadly shot, there was a reason, bizarre as it may have been and inexplicable as it remains. Early on, the police ruled out the possibility of a drive-by shooting. This, they say, was cold-blooded murder.

The blue house at 570 Woodland Avenue has new tenants. Every day hundreds of students go past it on their way to class. Some glance at it, most don't. "For a while I wasn't able to drive by that house," O'Ferral said. "Now I kind of turn my head and keep on going. It's awfully hard to drive by and not see Trent sitting there." ■

The specter of their teammates' deaths has had a haunting effect on the Wildcats' season.

JOHN BIEVER

On the field, there has been little relief, as halfback Moe Williams found in the drubbing by Auburn.

SOMETIMES YOU can tell a lot about a football team by the way it practices. One afternoon last week, as the Denver Broncos prepared for Sunday's road game against the Seattle Seahawks, they were obviously trying to find *some* way to right themselves after an 0–4 start.

Denver coach Wade Phillips, whose job was hanging by a chin strap, had been preaching that everybody needed to do that little bit extra to win. And so at the Wednesday practice, when the kick-return unit was going through its paces, the man at the end of the line for the scout team, right next to practice-squadder Tom Nalen, was quarterback John Elway. He sprinted downfield and threw a block at linebacker Richard Harvey. "Never seen a superstar do that before," Phillips said.

In two of Denver's losses Elway had lost his grip and thrown a costly errant pass on Denver's final play, so early in this practice assistant head coach–offensive coordinator Jim Fassel could be heard yelling, "Wet-ball drill! Wet-ball drill!" Two footballs wrapped in wet towels came in from the sideline, and Elway and his backups threw the sodden balls to their receivers for 10 minutes.

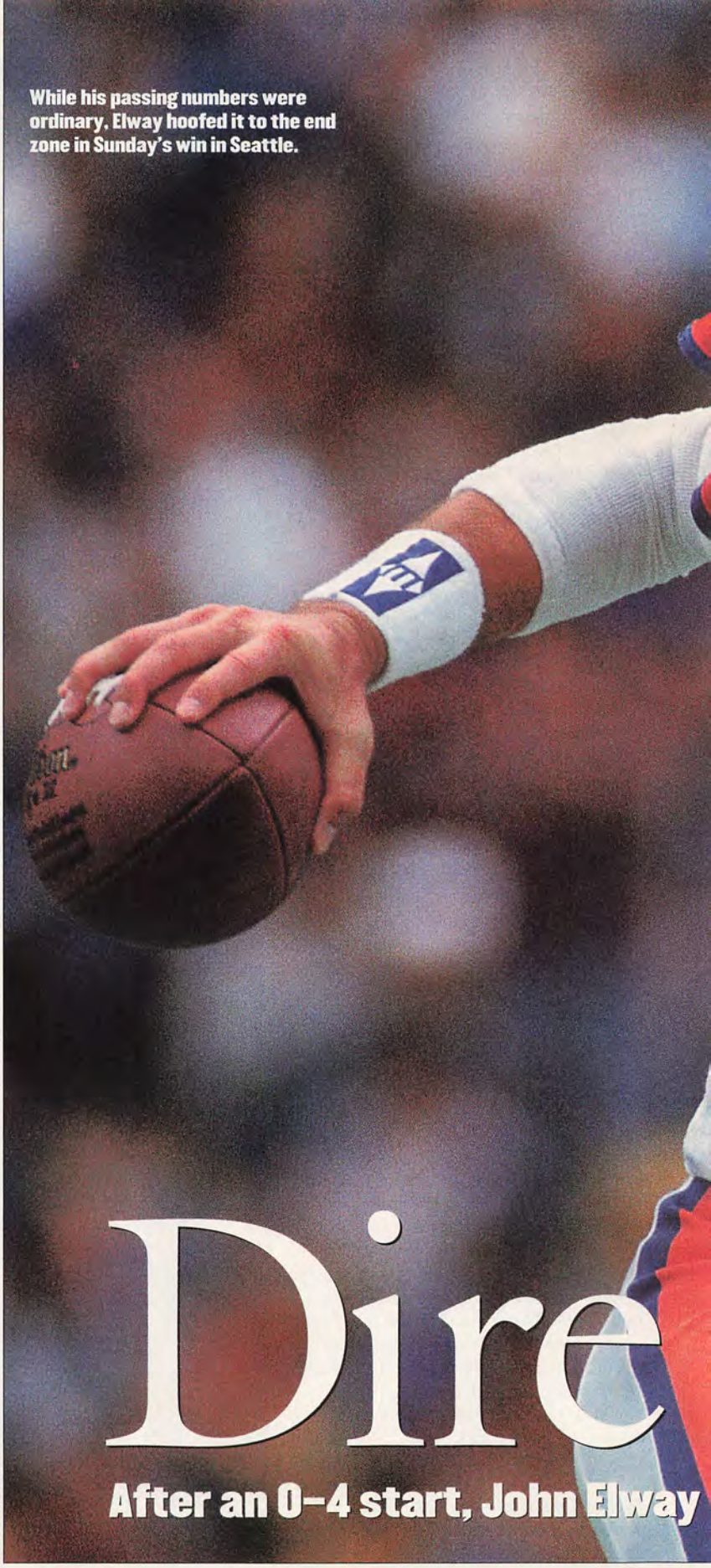
Later, Phillips, who used to be the Broncos' defensive coordinator, did some hands-on coaching of the defense. After Denver's 27–20 loss to the Buffalo Bills on Sept. 26, the Bronco defense was yielding a league-high 34.3 points a game. Phillips, who had taken the unit from defensive coordinator Charlie Waters, presided over the switch from a 4–3 defense to one combining the elements of the 4–3 and the 3–4.

And in the wake of a run of injuries, Phillips showed a gallows-humor side in mid-practice. "Hey, did you hear we set a record today?" he said to Denver personnel director Bob Ferguson. "We had our 15th surgery of the year."

But of all the nutty things to happen to the Broncos this season, none has been nuttier than this: Elway, the Hall of Fame shoo-in, has the best supporting cast he's ever had on offense, and until Sunday, Denver was winless. A 16–9 victory over the Seahawks was salve for the wounded Broncos, but Denver is still 1–4 with a harrowing stretch of division contenders—the Kansas City Chiefs, the San Diego Chargers and the Cleveland Browns—looming the next three weeks. Amazingly, the defense carried the Broncos in Seattle, but the offense continued to be mystifyingly inept. For example, Elway, the $4.7 million-a-year quarterback and his frustrated $2.6 million-a-year receiver, Anthony Miller, did not connect on a single pass.

Over the last two off-seasons no other team has attacked the new free-agent market with the gusto of the Broncos. And yet no other team has been stung more by it. Denver hit the salary cap without filling all of its needs, especially on defense. And its high-priced offensive acquisitions have not given it the explosiveness it had hoped for.

The pressure to reverse this season's downward spiral has fallen squarely on three men: Elway, Phillips and Bronco owner Pat Bowlen.

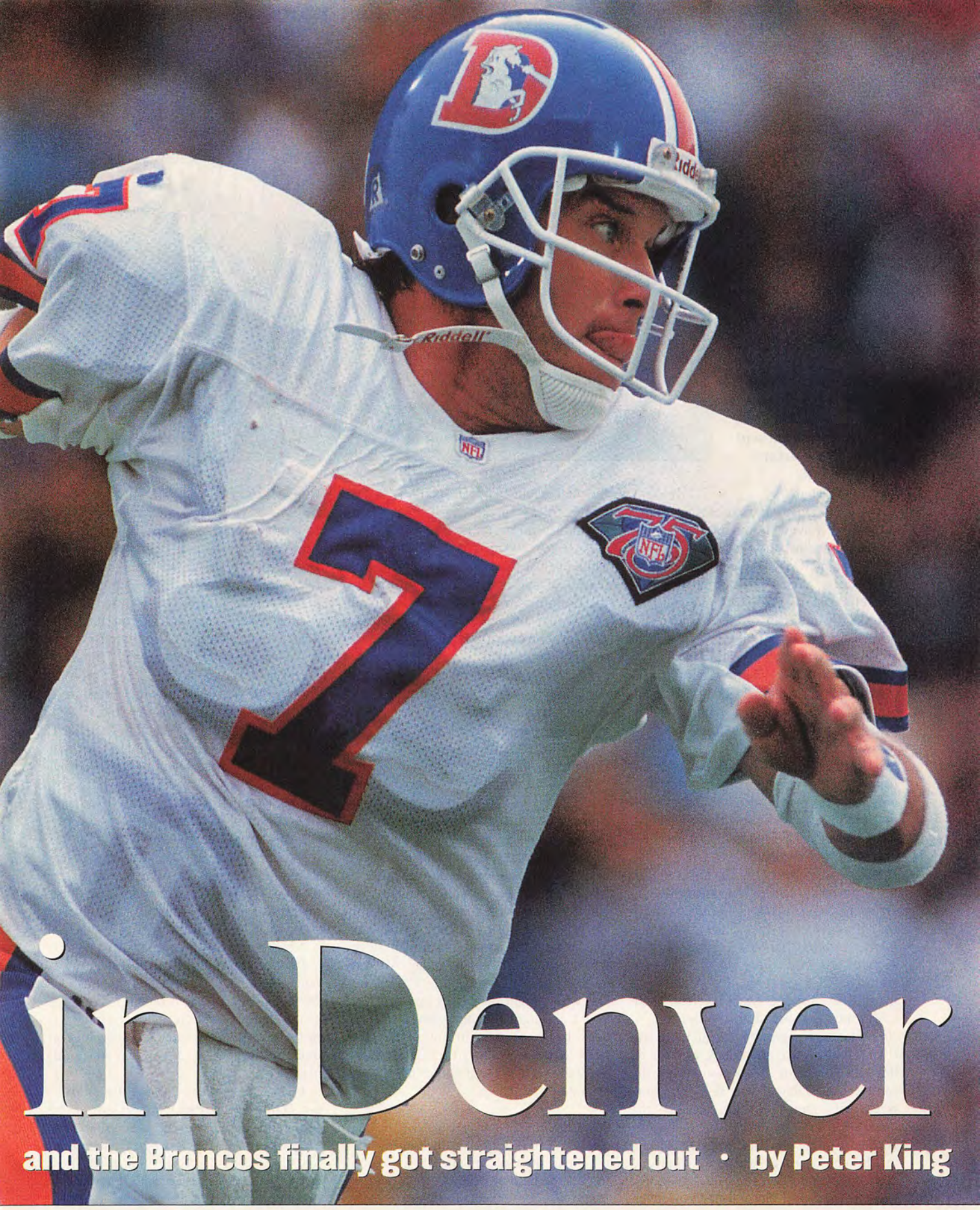


While his passing numbers were ordinary, Elway hoofed it to the end zone in Sunday's win in Seattle.

RICHARD MACKSON

Dire

After an 0–4 start, John Elway



in Denver

and the Broncos finally got straightened out · by Peter King

RICHARD MACKSON (2)

His job in peril, Phillips took the reins of the defense, which now has held opponents without a TD for five quarters.

The Quarterback

Elway lost his customary cool momentarily during a conversation a few days before the game against the Seahawks. How in the world, he was asked, could Denver be 0–4? "Look," he replied, "I make no personnel decisions. People think, well, this is John Elway's team, and that means it's John Elway's fault. I don't make any decisions. I'm a cog in the machine."

Elway finished last year with four wideouts—Arthur Marshall, Derek Russell, Kitrick Taylor and Cedric Tillman—who have been released or traded a total of 12 times in their careers. In the off-season the Broncos acquired Miller, who went to four Pro Bowls while with the Chargers, and Mike Pritchard, who had 201 catches in three seasons with the Atlanta Falcons. Yet Denver has averaged nearly two fewer points a game than last season.

What is even more significant is that in his 12th season Elway, the master of The Drive, has come up short in the clutch. In the first game of the season, with the Broncos trailing San Diego 37–34 with 43 seconds left, and with a second-and-goal from the Charger three, Elway rolled to his right and picked out a receiver in the end zone. But as he threw the ball, it slipped from his grip, went straight up and then fell like a wounded duck. San Diego linebacker Junior Seau recovered the fumble, and Denver was 0–1. The next week, with Denver losing 22–19 to the New York Jets late in the fourth quarter, Elway brought the Broncs to the Jet 12, but he could not get them into the end zone. Denver settled for a field goal, lost the overtime coin flip and never touched the ball again. The Broncos were 0–2.

The following Sunday, Elway was respectable, but everyone else was awful in a 48–16 loss to the Los Angeles Raiders. Then against the Bills, with Denver trailing 27–20, Elway had a fourth-and-two at the Buffalo four with 25 seconds remaining. Under pressure, Elway launched a pass into the end zone that sailed five feet over Tillman's head.

Elway gutted out the win in Seattle, banging his right thumb on a Seahawk helmet on the second series of the game and playing with a bad bruise the rest of the day. His 15-for-29, 146-yard day was far off his standard, but it did the job. "That wasn't a monkey on our back," he said. "It was a 500-pound gorilla. Now I don't have to wake up to the clock radio telling me about the 0–4 Broncos."

Yet Elway and Fassel still have some explaining to do. Why spend a mint on Miller and send him on pass routes to nowhere? Elway didn't throw to Miller for the first 26 minutes of the Seattle game and wound up passing to him only five times in 29 attempts on the day. After the game Miller was frustrated. "I'm the person who caught 84 passes last year, and now I've caught 12 in five games," he said. "I've been the man in any offense I've been in, but now, because I'm not seeing the ball much, when it comes my way I'm startled."

The Coach

On Sept. 16, Phillips's father-in-law died of a heart attack. On Sept. 18, while coming off the field at Mile High Stadium after the Raider debacle, Phillips was pelted with debris. On Sept. 19, three Denver newspaper columnists called for Phillips to go. On Sept. 23, Phillips attended his son Wesley's junior varsity football game—the boy threw three interceptions—and then joined the youngsters at a McDonald's after the game. "Hey, coach," said a fellow diner, "you probably haven't heard about Mike Pritchard yet."

"What are you talking about?" Phillips asked.

"He's in the hospital with a ruptured kidney or something," the guy said.

That afternoon at practice Pritchard had dived for a pass and landed with the ball beneath him. That night Pritchard was admitted to a hospital with internal hemorrhaging from a lacerated kidney. The Broncos don't know when he'll return to action. Then on Sept. 26, in Buffalo, running back Rod Bernstine, another $1.8 million weight on the Broncos' salary cap, was lost for the year with a knee injury. On Sept. 29, Phillips's wife, Laurie, stepped in a hole and broke her foot.

Now there's a nice couple of weeks.

Phillips knows that the ax is being sharpened—and it's his head on the block. Bowlen is not a patient man. "I refuse to give a vote of confidence," the owner said last week. "I'm not here to judge how a guy coaches. I'm here to judge wins and losses."

Unlike his predecessor, the disciplinarian Dan Reeves, Phillips does not chew hides and fire people when things go bad. He nurtures and supports. "Coaching is teaching," says Phillips. "Some coaches coach by fear and intimidation, but I don't believe in that. People are taught to

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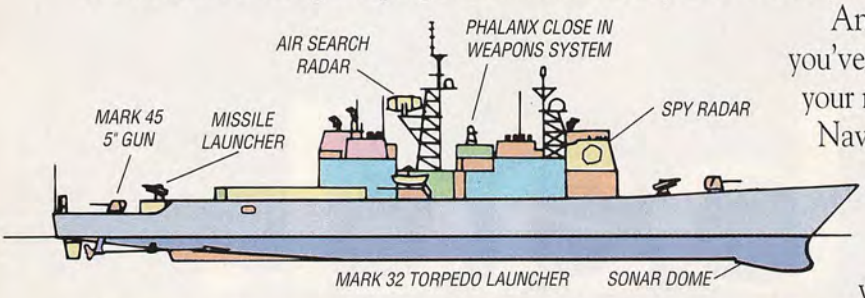

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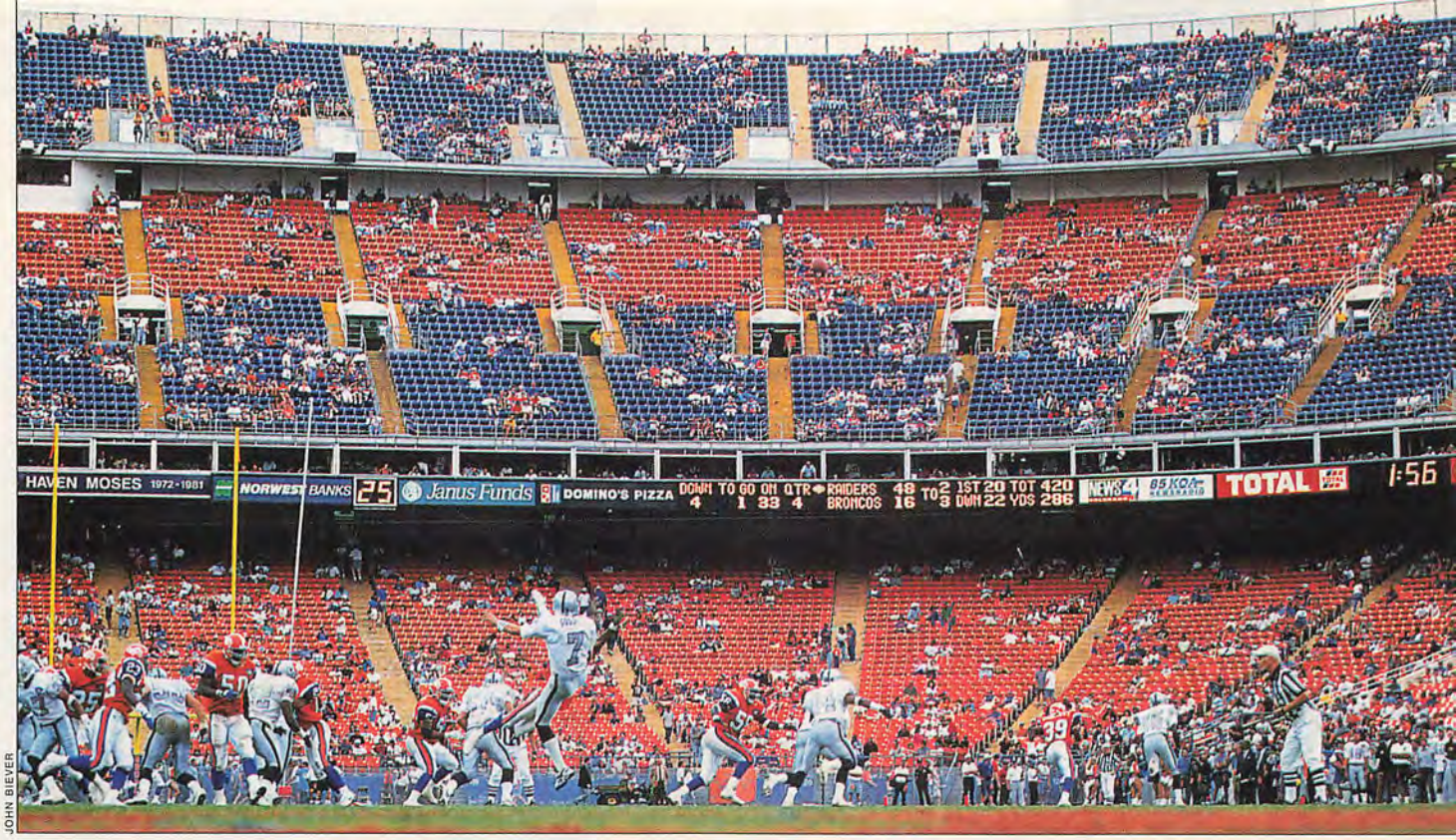


JOHN BIEVER

do things, not yelled at to do things."

His gentle style aside, the biggest knock on Phillips is that he and Ferguson spent too much money on offense and not enough on defense. He disagrees. "I think you can put a good defense together with less talent than you can on offense," he says. "You can play winning defense with not particularly great players who play with intensity and play well together."

Phillips pulled the right strings on Sunday, sending linebacker Mike Croel into the Seattle backfield for six tackles and three quarterback pressures. The defense gave Denver some teeth. It will need that bite until the offense starts scoring four touchdowns a game.

The Owner

Bowlen didn't have complete control of the Broncos, whom he bought in 1984, until he let Reeves go after the '92 season. Bowlen wanted to run the franchise, so he replaced Reeves with the more pliant Phillips. Before the 1993 season, with the blessing of Bowlen and his general manager, John Beake, Ferguson and Phillips gave unheralded free-agent guard Brian Habib a contract worth $1.4 million a year and dealt first-, second- and sixth-round picks to the Minnesota Vikings for left tackle Gary Zimmerman, who was signed to a contract that averages out to $2.35 million annually. Getting Pritchard a year later cost Denver first-, third- and seventh-round picks, plus a $2 million salary.

The Broncos are now snug up against the salary cap, which means they will have to chop some payroll in the off-season to sign the defensive help they need. Worse, they don't have a pick in next April's draft until the fourth round. The only way they will obtain immediate defensive help will be to buy it on the free-agent market.

"I can't be second-guessing our people right now," Bowlen says, "or I'd be second-guessing myself."

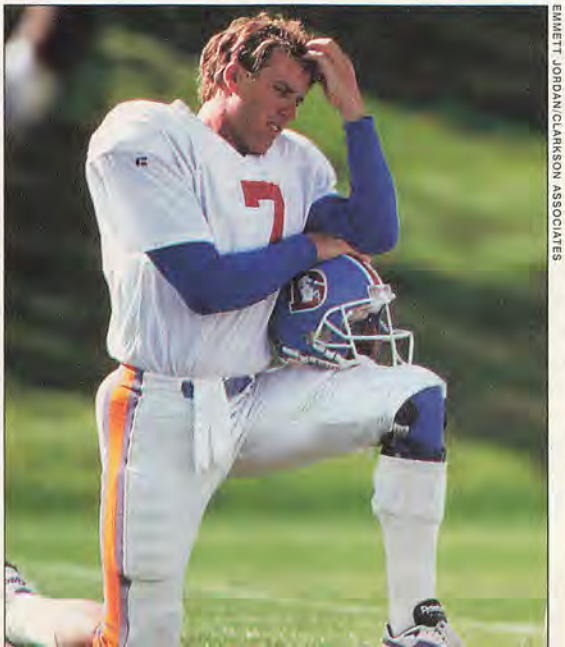
But he believes that team chemistry was forgotten when the Broncos were assembling this year's team. That's why he encouraged the re-signing of 34-year-old linebacker Karl Mecklenburg and 35-year-old safety Dennis Smith. Bowlen says, "What some players lack in ability, they make up for in team cohesiveness."

Fans fled the Raider debacle at Mile High, and Elway has been left to ponder where it all went wrong.

But couldn't the millions that the Broncos will spend on Miller have been better spent on a player like William Fuller, the defensive end who moved last spring from the Houston Oilers to the Philadelphia Eagles for $2.25 million a year? Through Sunday, Fuller had six sacks.

By not adding a couple of veteran defensive players—Richard Dent or Rickey Jackson or Leonard Marshall—Denver made it almost mandatory that Elway put big numbers on the board every Sunday. "We could have had Fuller or Dent [who signed with the 49ers], but they were old, and we didn't want a guy for a year," says Ferguson. "We're trying to build a championship team here, and you can't do it all in one year."

Denver had better hope that Elway still has lots of heroic football left in him. He'll need it to save both Phillips's job and Denver's season. ■


EMMETT JORDAN/CLARKSON ASSOCIATES

HAVING PANNED the largest amateur golf gold nuggets in his own country this year, 18-year-old U.S. Amateur champion Tiger Woods journeyed to the outskirts of Paris last week in search of treasure in the shadow of the gilded Palace of Versailles. The result: He unearthed another hefty lode of confidence and experience in helping the U.S. win its first World Amateur Team Championship in a dozen years.

The Americans' 11-stroke victory over runner-up Great Britain & Ireland was indisputably led by flinty Allen Doyle, whose 72-hole total of 277 was the low individual score in the biennial competition, which this year attracted four-man teams from 45 countries. On Sunday, the 46-year-old Doyle made up for a bogey, triple bogey start with a heroic six-under-par run over the final seven holes. "I felt awful," he said of his 40 on the front nine, "but I was damned if I wasn't going to come scratching back." And so, with the U.S. trailing by four strokes with nine holes to play, he fired a 30 on the back nine to spark the runaway victory.

But Woods also had his claws out, shooting a 72 on Sunday despite the pressure of playing in the tournament's final threesome. "I thought batting cleanup would suit Tiger to a tee," said Doyle. "He already had the crowd, and the young man is not afraid of pressure."

"I loved it," said Woods, whose rounds of 70-75-67-72 (sixth individually) all counted toward the team score in a format that tallied a team's best three rounds each day. "My only thought was to hit solid golf shots all day long. Nothing can go wrong then."

Almost nothing has gone wrong for Woods in his meteoric golf career. As a superstar amateur—he is the only player to win three straight U.S. Junior Amateur championships, the only player to win both the U.S. Junior and the Amateur and the youngest player ever to win the Amateur—he is galvanizing interest in amateur golf for the first time in decades.

In Versailles, Woods was clearly the star, drawing galleries larger than those of all the French golfers combined. The Gallic press celebrated him as much as it has any American since Jerry Lewis. The sports daily *L'Equipe* called him TIGER LA TERREUR, while the daily *Le Figaro* compared him with another prodigy—Mozart.

The World Amateur began in 1958, when 29 countries competed for the Eisenhower Trophy at the Old Course in St. Andrews and Australia upset the U.S. The Americans were out for revenge two years later at Merion, outside Philadelphia, and they won by 42 strokes.

Although the U.S. won eight of the next 11 World Amateurs, it came to Versailles riding an ignoble streak of five straight runner-up finishes. The fact that the Americans lost to a different team each time speaks well of the improvement in world golf, but this year's U.S. contingent—Doyle; Woods; Todd Demsey, the 22-year-old 1993 NCAA champion from Arizona State; and 42-year-old John Harris, the '93 U.S. Amateur champion—was the favorite to regain the Eisenhower Trophy.

Woods had been to France before, at 14, as a member of a team of Southern California junior golfers who played juniors from the French Golf Federation. So this time he skipped the U.S. team's sightseeing tour of Paris and stuck close to the course and the practice range. Indeed, for the entire nine days he was in Versailles he avoided French cuisine, dining instead at the McDonald's down the block from the team hotel. "I can't handle all these sauces," he explained.

In short, Woods was not on some exotic field trip. Although his manner at the golf course is outwardly calm, his intensity is visible in flashes

The admiring French believe the sky's the limit for Woods.

Photographs by Anton Wont/Allsport

Tale of a Tiger

Young Tiger Woods was a winner again, this time at the World Amateur Team Championship

by Jaime Diaz

Woods's steady play on Sunday helped earn the trophy for him and (from left) Harris, Doyle, Demsey and U.S. captain Grant Spaeth.

of anger after bad shots and in his tight focus on the practice range. He also has a sharp eye for the techniques of others, and last week he helped Demsey with his swing and Harris with his putting stroke.

Woods didn't mess with Doyle's buggy-whip swing, and he developed tremendous respect for Doyle's fighting spirit. When Harris and Doyle teamed to beat Woods and Demsey out of $20 in a friendly practice round on Wednesday, Woods duly submitted to Doyle's needle. "We sort of left them there, dazed in the corner, bleeding from the nose, with the towel thrown in," said Doyle. But Woods got a measure of revenge when a British journalist wondered aloud whether Doyle, who operates a driving range in La Grange, Ga., was twice Woods's age. "Oh, he's a lot older than that," Woods said, accurately.

For all his practice, Woods's game was at loose ends when play began in earnest last Thursday. Yawning and trying to stay warm on a 38° morning at Golf de La Boulie, a heavily wooded course built in 1887, Woods promptly bogeyed the 1st and made three more bogeys before the turn. But he then summoned all his scrambling genius to keep his round in hand over the next seven holes. Finally, with the gift for the dramatic turnaround that has marked many of his triumphs, he eagled the 507-yard 17th hole with a drive, a four-iron and a 20-foot putt, and birdied the 18th to salvage a more-than-respectable, one-under-par 70.

By Woods's account, he hadn't hit the ball much better than Dzintars Vieglins of Latvia, who had toured Golf de La Boulie in 115. Vieglins, the coach of the Latvian team as well as the father of two of its players, had been enlisted to play only two weeks earlier after one of his players fell off a horse and broke his wrist. A 15 handicapper who actually lives in Sweden, Vieglins said, "We came here with two goals, to beat Russia and not to finish last." Since the Russian team had pulled out before the event and three teams finished behind Latvia, all went well. Throughout the event, officials armed with walkie-talkies kept things light with occasional updates on Vieglins's progress. "The Latvian is well into his second hundred," R&A secretary Michael Bonallack somberly intoned toward the end of Vieglins's 111 on Friday.

After the first round the U.S. led by two strokes over Sweden as it moved for the final three rounds to Golf National's L'Albatros course, a well-regarded design opened in 1990 that has been the site of the last four French Opens. Woods again had to scramble, this time to a 75 that counted toward the U.S. score when Harris shot 77. At the end of the day the U.S. trailed Great Britain & Ireland by one.

"I'm putting it so well, but I can't hit it," a frustrated Woods said on his way to the range. But after a couple of buckets, he discovered and corrected a slight reverse pivot. "I'm going to be tough to beat now," he said. Before going to bed, he called Houston for a confidence-building talk with his teaching pro, Butch Harmon.

On Saturday, Woods came to the 1st tee both rested and fired up. He opened with birdies on the first two holes, made three more to turn in 31 and survived two late three-putts to shoot 67, including a birdie at the last hole. With the steady Doyle adding a 69, the U.S. led by one stroke over Great Britain & Ireland and by four over Australia, which got a tournament-record 63 from Jason Dawes.

That night, at the U.S. team dinner, Woods, who recently began his freshman year at Stanford, got up and borrowed from Chip Beck's speech to his teammates before the final day of the 1993 Ryder Cup. "The will to win can overcome mechanical breakdowns," Beck had said. "I'm a big believer in that," Woods told a friend the next day. "The way I won the Amateur taught me that."

Indeed, for all the fluidity and power of Woods's game, it is his mental toughness that appears to be his greatest weapon. As each success brings higher expectations—not to mention the temptation to leave college, turn professional and mine real gold—it is Woods's inner strength that will have to hold him in good stead. "As talented as he is, Tiger's going to have to be better with his head than with his hands," says Doyle. "What I really like about him is that he knows that he's a long way from where he wants to get to. In golf, the way you get better is by knowing you're not there."

In the case of Tiger Woods, he might get closer to "there" than anyone yet. ■

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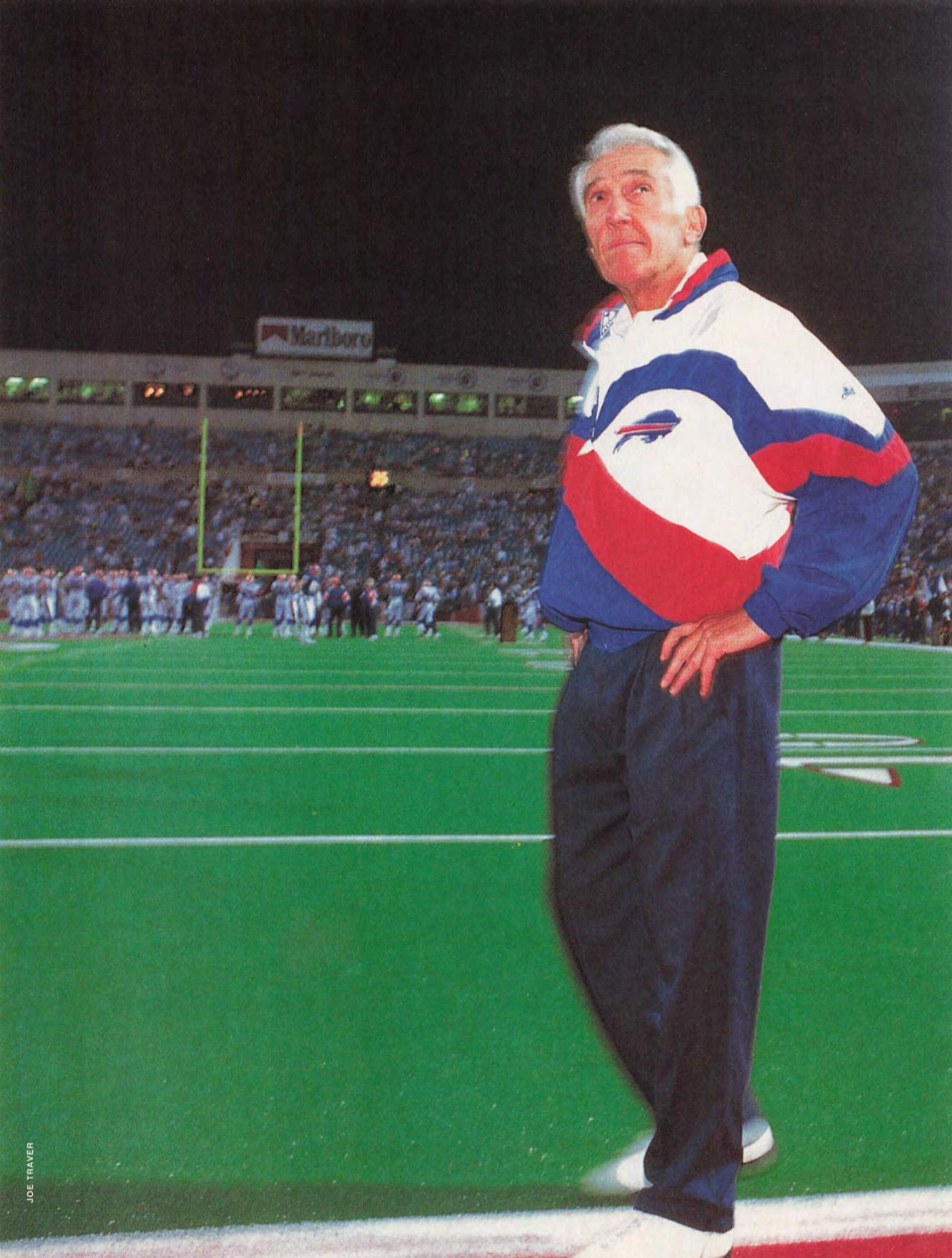

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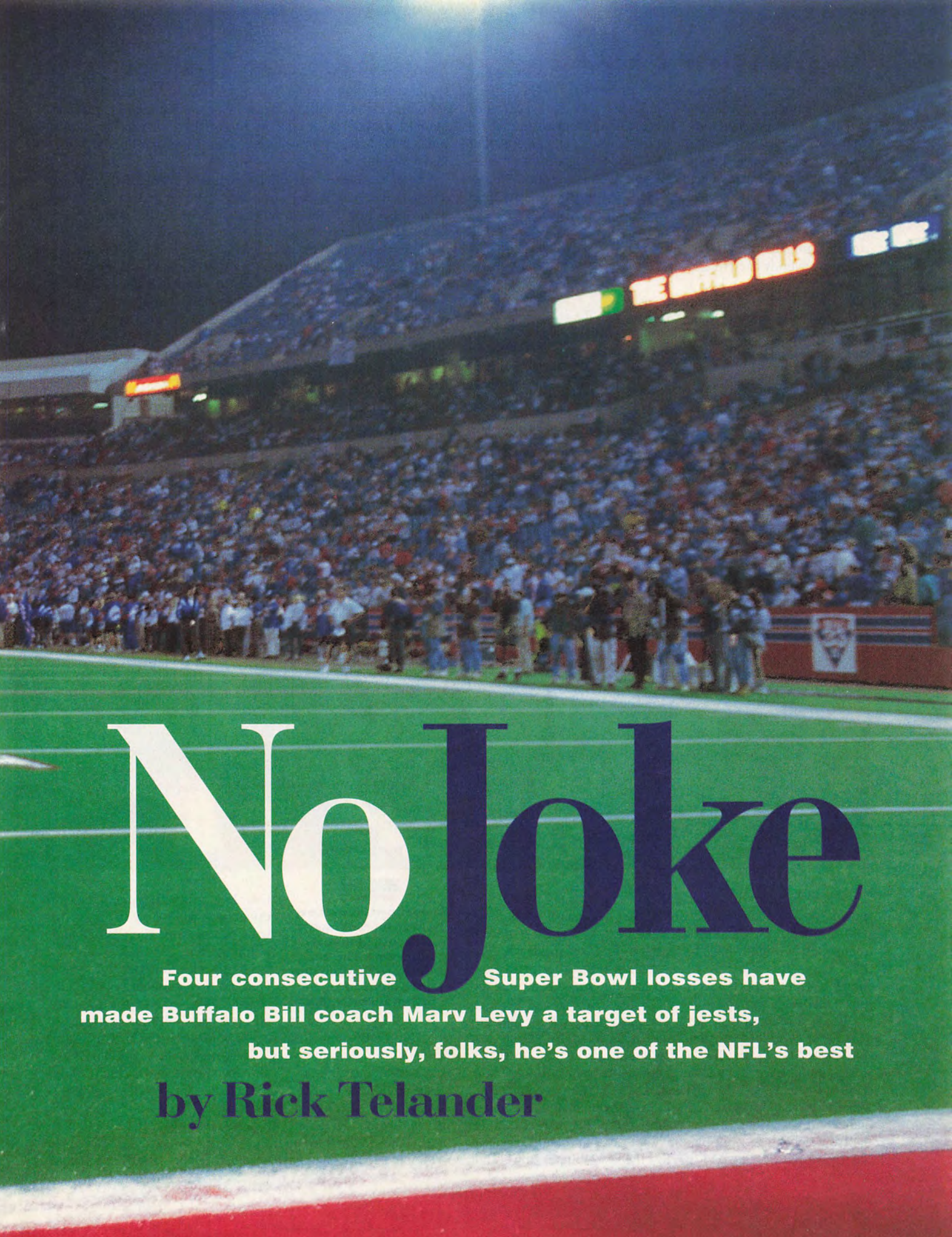


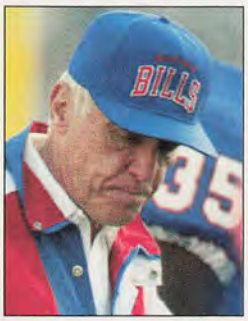
No Joke

Four consecutive Super Bowl losses have made Buffalo Bill coach Marv Levy a target of jests, but seriously, folks, he's one of the NFL's best

by Rick Telander

Sometimes late

at night Mary Frances Levy will be awakened by a disturbance in the dark. It doesn't happen very often now, and when it does, it is certainly not threatening or fearsome. But it reminds her of the forces that work beneath still waters, of the vectors and currents that rule the world regardless of what good men do. It's heart-wrenching, this disturbance. *Whoomp.* A muffled sound. Something hitting the blankets. A fist. "He'll be lying there," says Fran Levy of her husband, Marv, coach of the Buffalo Bills, "and he'll roll over, and he'll punch the mattress."



Does anybody need to ask why?

The top 10 things Levy said to his team at halftime of Super Bowl XXVIII last January, according to talk-show host David Letterman:

No. 10. "We won! Woo! We're Super Bowl champs!"

the Bills have simply prevented other AFC teams from getting shellacked by the NFC's New York Giants, Washington Redskins and Dallas Cowboys. Four in a row! We're talking Grand Slam here, babe! We're talking Joe Btfsltk! Did you hear about the new Dallas Cowboy welcome mats? They're rubberized Buffalo team photos.

Part of it, no doubt, is Buffalo itself. How many jokes are there about that subarctic Rust Belt city? The comedian Carrottop wears a Bill helmet that doubles as a tissue box for wiping away tears and nasal drippings, and the crowd goes wild.

Then there's Levy's countenance—wizened, heavy-lidded, avuncular, earnest, like that of a well-meaning but slightly out-of-it history professor. At times on the sideline during big games, Levy appears almost bemused as the action swirls around him; with his headset on, he could be a senior citizen listening to his favorite Sinatra tune done by Dr. Dre.

There are roles to be played in this world, people will tell you, and Levy and the Bills' role is that of professional opponents. When the Pittsburgh Steelers or the San Francisco 49ers go to the Super Bowl, they win. Every time. When the Bills go, they

Super Bowl blues: Levy held on for Norwood's kick in '91 (above), ripped a ref in '92, suffered in '93 (top) and joined Johnson in '94, to Buffalo's delight.

How is it that a kindhearted, patient, scholarly, organized, *successful* football coach has become the punch line for jokes about failure, ineptitude, senility and plain old choking? A decent man—and you really have to search to find somebody who dislikes Levy—has somehow been stuck in the corner of this nation's collective sports tavern and had the dunce cap pounded down on his silvery head.

Why? Four Super Bowl losses. No, correct that. Four *consecutive* Super Bowl losses. Minnesota Viking coach Bud Grant lost four Super Bowls, but he did it gradually, over time, so that it wasn't quite so easy for people to notice the trend. Grant is in the Hall of Fame. People don't make jokes about him. It could be argued, as it could for any coach who takes his team to the ultimate game and loses, that Grant got more out of his charges than he had any right to get. But people don't say that about Levy. Nor do they notice that the AFC has lost the last 11 Super Bowls, that lose. Every time. Levy is like a cab driver who will take you almost to your destination, then shrug and dump you out.

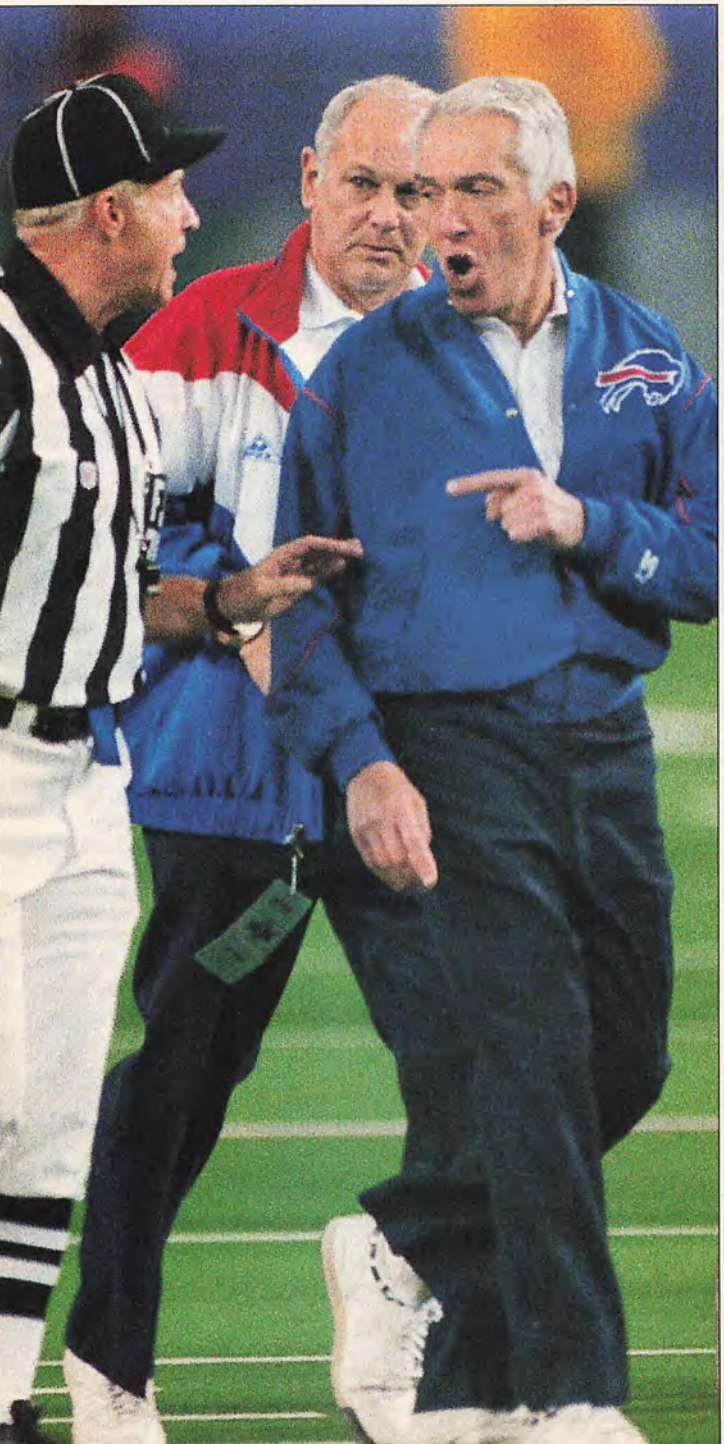
Is this characterization fair? Hell, no. Do you hear people calling the Bills one of the greatest NFL teams of all time? Of course not. But the Bills' five-year record of 62–21 is the NFL's best in the '90s. Buffalo wins when it has no business winning. Last year's 14–5 squad had the 27th-best defense in the league. And was it not a Levy-coached Buffalo team that staged the greatest comeback in NFL history by beating the Houston Oilers 41–38 in a wild-card playoff game on Jan. 3, 1993, after the Bills trailed by 32 points in the third quarter?

People say the Bills have so much talent—Jim Kelly, Bruce

Smith, Thurman Thomas, Andre Reed, Darryl Talley, Cornelius Bennett—that they should overwhelm their foes on skill alone. But get an NFL roster and check out all the teams—there are at least 10 with comparable goods. The nasty, speedy Los Angeles Raiders and the resurgent Kansas City Chiefs (ever hear of Joe Montana?) both lost to the Bills in last year's playoffs. But old Marv can't win. In Orlando last spring Fran had an eye infection, and Marv drove her to an emergency room to get some medication. While Fran was being looked at, one of the attendants kept staring at Marv. "I know you," the attendant said. "You're . . . you're . . . *Joe DiMaggio*!"

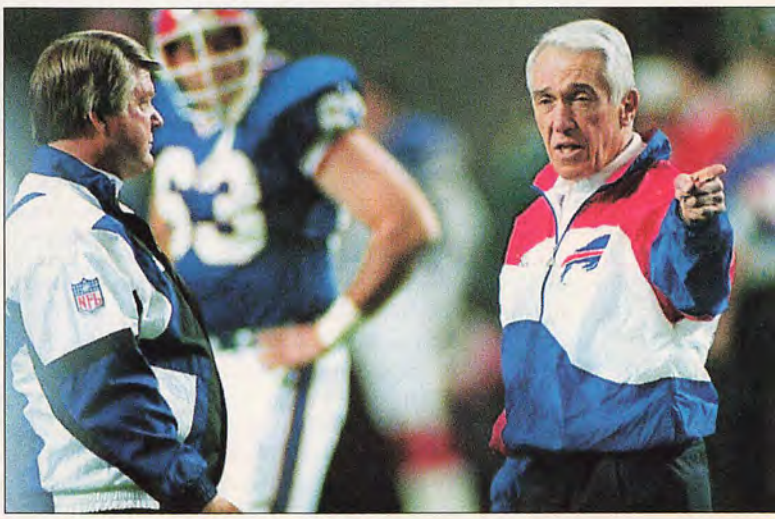
"It is ironic," says Chief owner Lamar Hunt, referring to (among other things) the fact that Levy finished so far out of last season's AP Coach of the Year voting that, well, he didn't get a single one of the 81 votes cast. Hunt himself blew it with Levy back in 1983 when he fired Levy with a year left on his coaching contract. Levy had gone to the Chiefs in 1978, inheriting a 2–12 team, and had improved it to 4–12, then 7–9, then 8–8, then 9–7 before the strike in '82 destroyed the team's momentum and the Chiefs finished 3–6.

"Our attendance was way down, and we probably overreacted to the circumstances—and the 'we' was me," says Hunt penitently. "Marv has proved me wrong. He's obviously a very, very bright man who knows how to put together an outstanding teaching staff. We're trying to emulate what they've done in Buffalo. And the odd thing is that instead of the Bills being considered a dynasty, they're the butt of all these jokes."



No. 9. "Boy, I'm sleepy. You guys sleepy?"
No. 8. "We've got a long trip home after the game, so I don't want anybody wearing themselves out."
No. 7. "Now get out there and rest on your laurels."

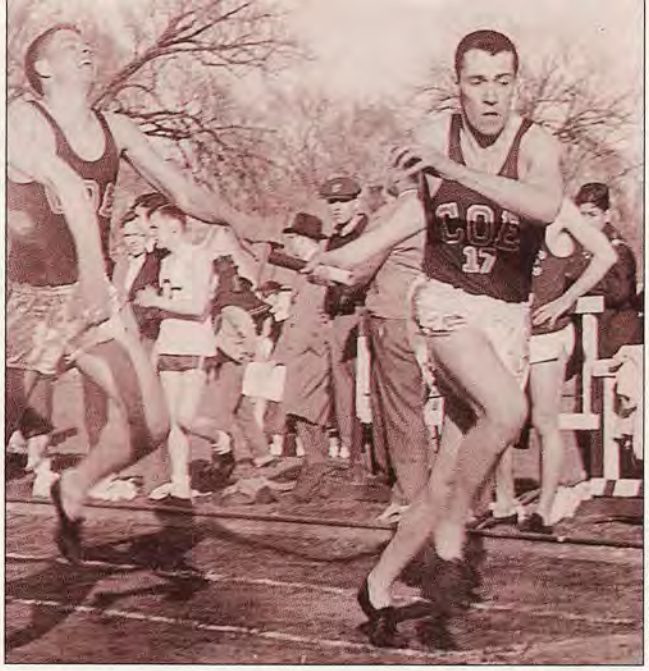
So much goes back to the first in the string, Super Bowl XXV, against the New York Giants at Tampa Stadium in 1991. The Giants controlled the ball with a plodding attack that grounded the Bills' high-wire offense and wore down Buffalo's defenders. Still, with the Giants leading 20–19 and eight seconds on the clock, Bill kicker Scott Norwood lined up for a potentially history-altering 47-yard field goal attempt. The ball just missed to the right. Now Norwood is gone, and the Bills have become so many



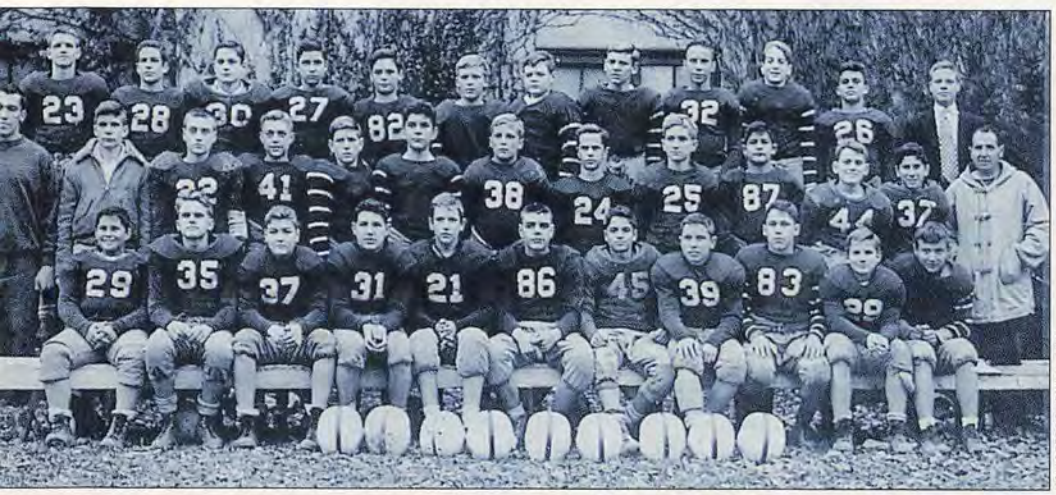
shoulder-padded Sisyphuses, rolling that big football up the hill only to have it chase them down again.

Levy pauses now in a workout to consider the eternal question. A fitness advocate with a lean 5′ 10″ body, he has no apparent hobbies other than working out ("So I don't sag all over," he says) and reading novels and history books. "He is a minimalist," says Fran. "He doesn't like clutter. And he can't really fix anything around the house." He took up golf back when he was the football coach at the University of New Mexico in the late '50s, played a lot for a couple of months, then appraised the thing.

CRAIG FUJI/AP ('91); JOHN IACONO ('92); BILL SIKES/AP ('93); ROBERT ROGERS (JOHNSON); GEORGE TIEDEMANN (FANS)



LEVY FAMILY COLLECTION



LEVY FAMILY COLLECTION

Levy (top, right) went from running relays at Coe to running the football team at Country Day (far left).

Marv Levy

"I'm supposed to be *enjoying* this?" he asked himself. He never picked up a club again.

Football, he says, is what keeps him going. The Super Bowl losses? They hurt for a while, but they nurture him too. "I coach as though I'm going to be here the rest of my life," he says. "Always. Nothing chagrins me."

As a sprinter at South Shore High School in Chicago back in the '40s, Levy was a fleet Jewish kid who ran hard but accepted what he could not change. At rival Wendell Phillips High there was a kid named Buddy Young, a future NFL star, and he beat Levy every time they raced for four straight years. "Every time," Levy says. "He won the state title in the 100, and he went on to be a great running back at Illinois." No anger, then? Levy is mystified by the question. What is there to be angry about?

He says, "I get letters from high school coaches saying, 'I want to be an NFL coach. What do I do?' I think their perspective is warped. *I* never thought I'd be an NFL head coach. I just do the best I can. Those letters hit me wrong—they reflect that the men's energies are focused on getting a job rather than doing it, rather than performing. I hear sometimes that to be a good coach you have to be mean. I disagree, because the essential quality of a coach is to be a good teacher. Just because my personality is different from, say, Mike Ditka's doesn't mean a thing. What I always say is, 'Plan your work and work your plan.' If you have everything prepared, the rest takes care of itself."

It's odd that after you get Levy to address the most obvious football issues, you're left wondering not so much why his teams do what they do, but why this man is a football coach at all. It's a question that stumps even his wife. "I don't understand it," Fran says. "It's a mystery."

A professor, absolutely. A doctor, an accountant, a shrink, yes. A man of the cloth. Or a stand-up comic, one of those deadpan guys like Steven Wright, stunned at such things as the order of the letters in the alphabet. Levy listens to a lot of country and western music. Why? "I like the humor," he responds. He is obviously a caring, studious man. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Coe College, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1950—"I don't know any dumb Phi Beta Kappas," says Lamar Hunt. "Do you?"—then enrolled at Harvard Law School but realized after six weeks that torts and briefs were not for him. He switched fields, earning a master's degree in English history from Harvard in 1951. So how did he wind up as an NFL coach? He had been a starting halfback in high school and at Coe, and something about the game simply stuck to him, infiltrating his core like a virus. When Marv called his dad back in Chicago to say that he felt compelled to be a coach of the roughest of games, Sam Levy was silent a good while before responding simply, "Be a good one."

"I played the game, I enjoy it, I know it, I like the people," Levy says to explain his calling. At Coe he had been drawn to the logic and intellect of coach Dick Clausen. Football may have been a hard game, but under Clausen it was also a controlled and scientific game, one that responded as much to order and precision as to brute force. These were notions that appealed to the teacher in Levy. And there was a coach at Oklahoma who absolutely mesmerized the young man. His name was Bud Wilkinson, and he would set football records with a quiet grace that was almost professorial, very nearly priestly.

To say that Levy was obsessed with Wilkinson's teachings would not be overstating the case. On summer vacations from Coe, Levy would drive his old jalopy to wherever Wilkinson was giving a seminar or clinic. He would take a seat somewhere in the stands and listen as if he were Plato studying Socrates. "Reno, Missoula, the Black Hills of South Dakota; Whitewater, Wisconsin; Canton, Ohio—I'd go wherever Wilkinson went," says Levy. "After he saw me for about the eighth time, he looked shocked. 'Are you here *again*?' he said. Through the years I probably saw him 75 to 100 times."

In Wilkinson, Levy saw a man with a makeup like his own, an even-tempered, meticulous, learned teacher. "Wilkinson was quiet and low-toned and had a great knack for encouraging players," Levy says. "He'd find something positive in a player, even the smallest thing, and jump at it. You'd see the player's self-esteem go up. Wilkinson did nothing for show, nothing superfluous. He could get right to the kernel of it. Good night, his drills were precise! His practices were short."

And so are Levy's. "I would guess we have the shortest prac-

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tices in the NFL," he states proudly. Indeed, Bill practices are legendary for their brevity and effectiveness. Some preseason sessions last just 70 minutes.

"Before Marv came, I used to get here at 7:30 a.m. and not leave until 6," says veteran Bill center Kent Hull. "Now it's 9 to 3:30, and we accomplish even more."

The strategy Levy uses is that of the professional manager whose workers need to be aimed, not meddled with. He doesn't fire up, he teaches. "I was at an evening practice back in 1984 when Marv was the head coach of the Chicago Blitz of the USFL," says veteran sportswriter Bill Jauss of the *Chicago Tribune*. "The team was terrible, because George Allen had taken most of the good players down to become the Arizona Wranglers, and Marv was left with rookies and culls. But after practice he politely lectured a rookie punt rusher, telling him that if he took the proper stance, took precisely six steps, leaped toward the kicker in a certain manner and watched the ball into his hands, he would surely block a kick in the scrimmage against the Wranglers the next day. It was just like a teacher saying, 'Here is what the final exam is going to be.' He said, 'Do precisely what I say and you will block a punt.' And the kid did."

NEIL LEIFER

Levy's affinity for special teams goes back two decades to his two seasons as a Redskin assistant.

Levy was born in 1925, though somewhere in the late '70s or early '80s he got younger, and now he gives his age as 66. It's easy to understand why—the NFL is not a codger-friendly organization, and a man of Levy's bearing should not be bound by a standard clock. "He was pretty old-sounding even in the mid-'70s," laughs Hunt. At any rate, even at 66, Levy is the oldest coach in the league, and, as he puts it, "there's not a generation gap between me and my players, there's a two-generation gap."

He has a hearing aid, but he doesn't wear it. "It's great in a movie," he says. "But I don't use it at something like a party, because it amplifies everything." He ponders the hearing situation a moment. "We have an alarm system in our house," he notes. "I can't hear it, but fortunately it has a light."

When the Bills were testing new speakers at Rich Stadium this year during a team practice, the sound was just loud enough so that it was audible but sub-Marv. "We were all dancing to the Steve Miller Band," says Hull affectionately.

No. 6. "Hey, Kelly, leave some champagne for everybody else."

Let's take a moment and list Levy's coaching jobs, all of which came after he spent three years in the Army Air Corps during World War II, Stateside, working as a meteorologist because of his nearsightedness: 1951–52, St. Louis (Mo.) Country Day School; 1953–55, Coe College; 1956–59, University of New Mexico; 1960–63, University of California; 1964–68, College of William and Mary; 1969, Philadelphia Eagles; 1970, Los Angeles Rams; 1971–72, Washington Redskins; 1973–77, Montreal Alouettes (CFL); 1978–82, Kansas City Chiefs; 1984, Chicago Blitz; 1986–present, Buffalo Bills.

Some of those jobs were as an assistant coach, and some were as the head man, but almost everywhere Levy went, he improved his team's record; and until he got to the Bills, he never had an offensive talent like quarterback Jim Kelly.

Together the two make an unlikely team—Levy calmly putting the keys to his trademark hurry-up offense in the hand of this most aggressive, confident and focused of drivers. "Marv is just a quality, class guy," says Kelly. "He tells all these old war stories, but they all mean something."

Levy knows that if he didn't have a self-motivated player like Kelly at the throttle, his own inability to be a rah-rah guy might prove fatal. He could never talk a reluctant quarterback into running an offense that is as frenzied and nerve-racking and potent as a big dragster. "Other coaches have told me they've tried the hurry-up, but their quarterbacks don't like it," says Levy. "But Jim does. He's swashbuckling. He believes he's going to win."

Kelly's special status on the team makes him a critical factor in the clubhouse, where the Bickering Bills of a few years ago almost came apart. To say there are big and fragile egos on the Bills is to say Lake Erie is wet. Levy never berates players publicly, never embarrasses them, and he'll even let them play jokes on him if it makes them happy. Two years ago rookies and free agents were stunned to see Thurman Thomas toss a clump of grass at the coach's head as a gag. "We love to pull jokes on Marv," says Kelly. "Once, we had this big piece of paper with circles on it, and I said, 'Marv, these circles are trees. Take a pen, close your eyes, and see if you can ski from point A to point B without hitting a tree.' He said, 'I know I'm in for trouble, but I'll do it.' He moved his pen along, and then I smacked him right in the forehead. 'Geez, Marv, you hit a tree!' I said. I hit him pretty hard. He probably went to his office and took some Nuprin."

"That absentminded-professor stuff is more contrived than true," notes Bill Polian, formerly the Bills' general manager and now G.M. of the Carolina Panthers. "He uses his lack of hipness for effect. I remember before the Pasadena Super Bowl [1993], he told the players they didn't need to go on those shows like David Letterman and Jay 'Leeno.' Just for effect." Polian is a huge Levy fan, calling him the "best teacher I've ever seen." He marvels that Levy never allows his ego to interfere with the team's plans. "Never, never, never," Polian says. "You look forward to coming to work with Marv, because it's always so positive."

But do the players always understand Levy's shtick? "To see Marv try to give a pep talk is like watching a librarian get all fired up," says former Bill nosetackle Fred Smerlas, not a Levy fan. "Your eyes glaze over. I'd write down his words and then ask him the definitions. Chuck Knox used to say '—— him where he

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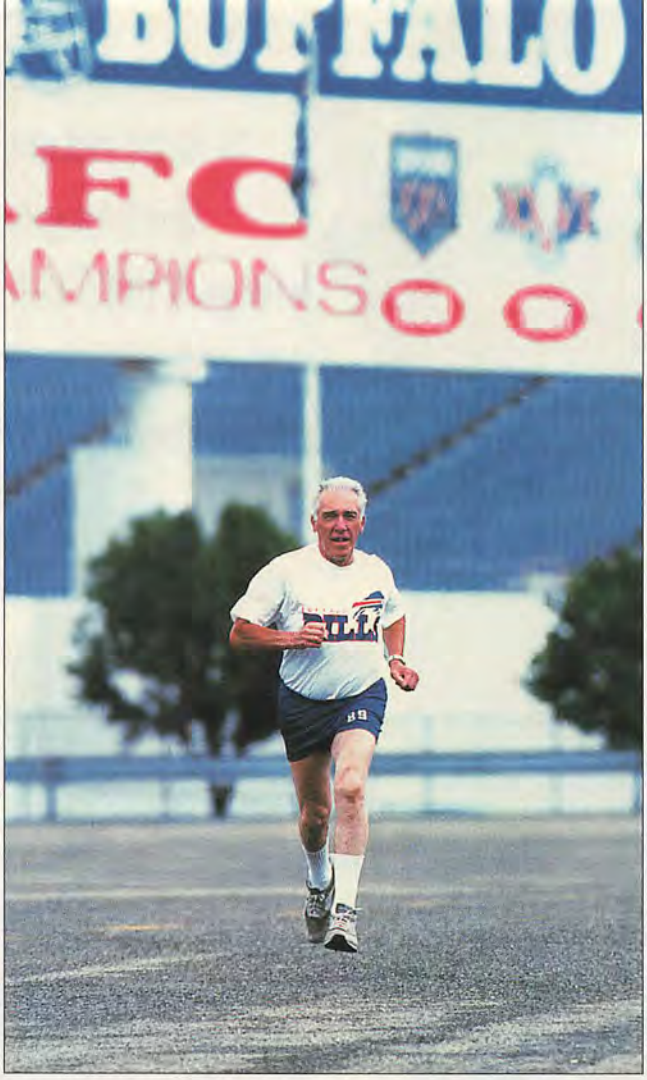

JOE TRAVER

The Bills' No. 1 fitness fanatic needs no sign to jog his memory about the team's accomplishments.

breathes!' to get you up. Marv tells you about some 1902 war."

Most of Smerlas's attitude springs from the less-than-up-front way he felt Levy left him unprotected under Plan B in 1990. "I wanted him to tell me face-to-face what was happening," Smerlas says. "For a while I wanted to head-butt him to death." Smerlas shrugs. "But who wants to tell a 300-pound Greek he has to go?"

Even Steve Tasker, Levy's beloved special teams ace—and the first player Levy acquired after replacing fired Bill coach Hank Bullough with seven games to go in the 1986 season—acknowledges that Levy has one glaring shortcoming: "He's not a strong motivator, and he covers himself by saying, 'If I have to motivate you on game day, then I've got the wrong team.' Still, there are times when we need to get chewed out. But Marv doesn't have it in him to do it." And yet, Tasker adds, Levy knows this. His defensive coordinator is Walt Corey, a man who never found a butt he couldn't blister. "Walt will just scream," says Tasker. "You need that on defense. But offense, that's more subdued and cerebral. You have to be on your toes, reading defenses. There really isn't time for ranting and raving."

No. 5. "What do you mean there's two more quarters?"

Part of the deal is that Levy is just an old-fashioned gentleman. Rusty Jones, his strength and conditioning coordinator, gets the

Marv Levy

players into tip-top, low-fat shape, and Levy teaches them what to do. It's that simple. "Why would players respect you if you're just brutal?" asks Levy. In fact, Levy's teams are always well rested and full of pep. "I think we have beaten teams because their enthusiasm has been dulled or, physiologically, they've left it elsewhere," says Levy. He hates scrimmages, senseless contact and dangerous drills. "I liked Bear Bryant, and I watched his practices at Alabama," Levy continues. "They weren't Bataan death marches. Paul Brown used to say, 'The coach who scrimmages all the time doesn't know what to practice.' "

So what about the full-metal skirmishes encouraged by a coach like, say, Buddy Ryan? "As Bobby Dodd from Georgia Tech once said, 'The longer it's been since a coach played, the more he forgets what it's like to play,' " Levy says.

One of Levy's heroes when he was a kid was Joe Louis. The Brown Bomber intrigued him partly because of his skill at a dangerous game but most of all because of his modesty and security as a man. "After a win he'd say, 'Just another lucky night,' " Levy says. "But you knew it wasn't. In football your players shouldn't have to prove their manhood every day. As Bud Wilkinson used to say, 'You can make a player prove he's tough so many times that finally he'll no longer enjoy the game.' "

It is far better, in Levy's philosophy, to have a coach who is thinking than a coach who is testing. "There are so many drill sergeants, and of course there are those with no control," says Hull. "But Marv is such a diplomat. He won't humiliate you, but he will call you to the office and fine you. He can reprimand someone like Bruce Smith without embarrassing him."

Levy keeps Tasker and fellow special teams expert Mark Pike on the Bills even though neither is a very skilled position player. Because Levy has allowed them to become adept at their phases of the game, they have won far more games for the Bills than "skilled" bench warmers could have. Why don't other coaches use their rosters this way? "I couldn't tell you," says Tasker.

No. 4. "Let's plan exactly how you're gonna dump the Gatorade on me."
No. 3. "O.K., boys, get out there and start sucking."
No. 2. "Wait a minute. If we win, we have to go to Disneyland."

Before a game last season Levy promised his boys that if they won, he would sing a pertinent song to them. They won, and he warbled a ditty called *It Ain't What You Do, It's the Way What You Do It*, by that happening band Bob Crosby and the Bobcats. What are Generation X-ers to make of this? They also hear Levy sing raunchy numbers from World War II days and turn the misadventures of Adolf Hitler into a lesson about away games. "I reminded them how Hitler almost conquered the world," says Levy. "But then he got bogged down in Russia. And you know what his problem was? He couldn't win on the road!"

Polian says it is just such enthusiasm combined with a complete absence of pretense that makes Levy the outstanding coach he is. Back in 1979, when he was with the Chiefs, Levy wrote a masterly season-ending report on the status of the entire organization, from players to coaches to facilities. He recommended to Kansas City management not only that quarterback Steve Fuller spend more time developing his throwing skills but also that the Chiefs get a "better headset and telephone setup at our games" and that they adopt a good fight song "to fully capture fan and city spirit." Levy wrote the fight song himself and presented it to Hunt, and the Chiefs sang it for several years. "This is a guy," notes Hunt, "who pays attention to detail."

Proof that all of this works, says Polian, is that the Bills keep

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coming back. Year after year. They lost their first Super Bowl by a point, the second by 13 points, the third in a rout and the fourth by a depressing 17 points after leading at the half 13–6. But they always come back to the Big Game. *Drive for Five in '95!* It's painful, but it is, in truth, amazing. "That resiliency is a direct reflection of what Marv Levy has taught all his players," says Polian. "They may not realize it now, but in 15 or 20 years, when we have our first Super Bowl reunion, they'll be saying, 'This was a unique man—he taught us how to be champions.' "

At the Bills' annual Kickoff Luncheon at the Buffalo Convention Center in late August, Levy leads his troops into the hall, looking like a tailor presenting the models for a big-and-tall men's catalog. The sellout crowd gazes with admiration, high spirits and, yes, a bit of concern. Can Buffalo truly be jinxed? Why can't Americans realize that second place is still a hell of a place? Will the Bills be remembered, as Smerlas fears they will, "not just for losing the Super Bowls, but for being like a circus act"?

The announcer proclaims, "Only one man in the world can say he coached his team to four consecutive conference championships: Marv Levy!"

The coach steps up to the microphone, adjusts his glasses and his notes, and speaks. "The feeling of exultation or of being down lasts about two weeks," he says. "As Rudyard Kipling said, triumph and disaster are both impostors."

He looks at his players in rows at long tables on either side of him. "Ability without character will lose," he says. He introduces his assistant coaches, apologizing at one point for missing an offensive coach because, he says, "I've got lights shining in my eyes."

Then he confronts the question one more time: "Are we going to the Super Bowl again?" He clearly is irked, the professor who has heard one too many times from the stupid frat kid in the back of the hall. "Who the hell knows who's going!" Levy says. "There are about six or seven teams in each conference that could go."

This isn't exactly what the folks want to hear. Wouldn't Jimmy Johnson promise something? Wouldn't Don Shula say something firm and inspirational?

"Is our goal to win?" Levy asks. "No!" he bellows. "Our goal is to develop our team, to earn what we get, to learn, to develop unselfish attitudes. If we achieve that, the result is that we'll win."

He finishes to polite applause. He says the things that the great teaching coaches say—men like John Wooden, who almost never used the word *win* when talking to his UCLA basketball squads. *Do what you are supposed to do, and success will follow. But do not blindly pursue success.* It is an almost Zen-like directive, a circular and elusive one, and it is one that does not wildly stimulate eager fans.

JOE TRAVER

A fan named Fran is Marv's biggest supporter both at home and at the football stadium.

Later Fran Levy will wonder about Marv's speech to the boosters. She sat quietly and listened to it all, and when he asked her afterward, "Did it sound like a lecture?" she said, "Yes, it did."

She met Marv when he was coaching the Blitz. She was a secretary and lived in suburban Des Plaines, near the high school field where the Blitz practiced. Fran and Marv were married in February 1993, both for the second time. Fran knew nothing about football, but she rejoiced at her bonding with a man she describes as private, even-keeled, happy "and so cute." But she thinks that a lot of people don't appreciate him for the good man he is. She knows they don't appreciate his speeches. She says, "I wanted to tell him, 'Don't say that. People won't understand the part about achieving this and this and then it leads to this.' They will probably say, 'Yeah, that's just what we thought—you don't want to win a Super Bowl!' "

No. 1. "Hey, fellas, more fudge?"

Marv Levy has no children of his own, though Fran has a 26-year-old daughter, Kimberly, to whom the coach freely offers advice. Before Kimberly went on a vacation to Las Vegas, Marv, dusting off an old one, asked her if she'd heard about the man who drove there in a $20,000 Pontiac. "I thought, Uh-oh, a long story," recalls Fran. "Then he says, 'Yeah, he came home in a half-million-dollar Greyhound bus.' "

"He is a very happy man," Fran says. "He can sing the words to every college fight song ever written. He sings when he's shaving and in the car. He can go on and on." But there was that time last spring when they were driving through Washington, D.C., and Marv had been cranky about little things, and Fran wondered what was wrong. There was a button he couldn't button, a bridge they missed, a traffic jam they got stuck in. "I finally stopped him and said, 'You're so mad. Why? Are you unhappy in the marriage? I'm never going on a vacation with you again. We used to have so much fun.' "

The coach looked at his wife for a moment and then said, "Did you ever think I might be frustrated over the loss of the last four Super Bowls?"

Saying that seemed to cure him of his mourning. He became Teacher Marv once more, but Fran is now plagued by a severe case of the what-ifs. "I get angry that the players didn't win a Super Bowl for *him*," she states. "I told him he should get mad at them and tell them, 'You should have won for me! You let me down!' " She sighs and smiles, amused at and proud of his response. "He said, 'Never!' The thought of it amazed him."

Not long after she made her suggestions, Marv Levy came to his beloved bride and said, "Franny, don't tell me how to coach."

She doesn't anymore. She simply says, "He's such a good guy. I don't know how he can be. But god bless him." ■

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INSIDE **The NFL**

by PETER KING

Out of Alignment

TWO NEW teams will join the NFL next September, but realignment has stalled—at least for '95. It's a near certainty that the Jacksonville Jaguars will begin play in the AFC Central and the Carolina Panthers will join the NFC West, and if that doesn't make sense to you, well, neither will this: Though logic would dictate that the Indianapolis Colts of the AFC East trade divisions with the Tampa Bay Bucs of the NFC Central, that won't happen. The reason: "That would give us three dome teams in a five-team division," says Green Bay president Bob Harlan.

Each of the four NFC Central teams north of Tampa wrote to commissioner Paul Tagliabue to tell him of their concerns about playing on the domes' AstroTurf surfaces.

That position all but kills the chance for two great rivalries to develop in the coming years. Chicago and Indianapolis—less than 200 miles apart—now play, at most, once every three years, as do Tampa Bay and Miami, which are separated by only about 270 miles of swimming pools and golf courses. A trade between the divisions would pit these natural antagonists against each other twice a year. But in the NFL, tradition and the self-interest of owners rule the realignment game.

Don't try to teach your kids geography by looking at a map of the NFL. For instance next fall, if the Rams move to Baltimore, which is one of the cities the franchise is considering, the NFC West would have three teams—Atlanta and Carolina would be the others—in the Eastern time zone. And no one has thought of New Orleans as the West since the Louisiana Purchase. In this division only San Francisco makes geographical sense—and pity the Niners their travel budget.

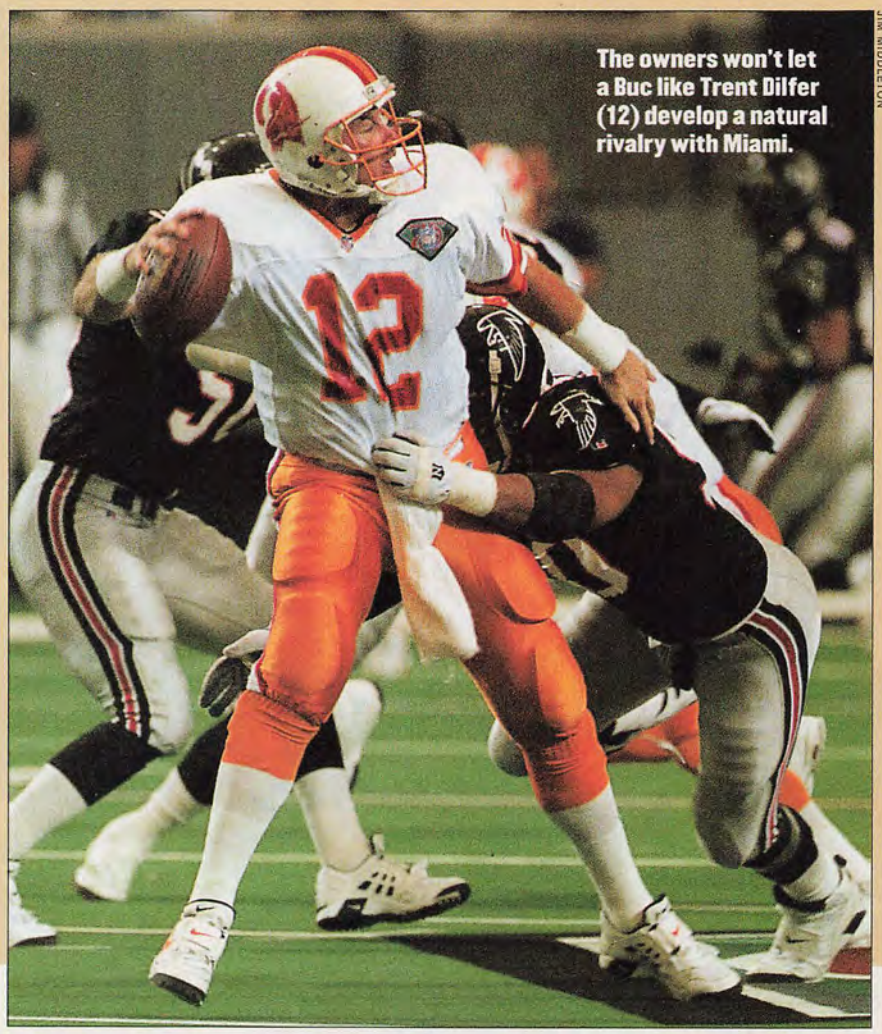
Arizona should be in the NFC West, but owner Bill Bidwill loves his rivalries with teams in the NFC East. Dallas should be in a Central or West division, but owner Jerry Jones also likes the sort of gerrymandering that retains the old NFC East grudge matches.

Five teams from among Atlanta, New Orleans, Jacksonville, Carolina, Miami and Tampa Bay should constitute a Southeast division. But if the league can't even orchestrate a Tampa-for-Indy trade or an Arizona-for-Atlanta swap, what chance is there for a truly revolutionary restructuring? Zip.

According to NFL rules, three quarters of the league's 30 owners must approve realignment, and Denver owner Pat Bowlen says there are at least 10 or 11 owners adamantly opposed to even minor changes. "You have to be realistic about it," Bowlen said after a late-September NFL meeting that featured debate about realignment. "You look around the meeting room and say, We're not going to get the votes to get it done. We are well advised to just slot the expansion teams in and get on with our lives."

Land of the Free

How odd that several teams that seemed to have been ravaged by free-agent losses in the past couple of seasons—Atlanta, the Giants, Philadelphia—have gone through the first third of '94 playing over .500. Atlanta lost four key players in cornerback Deion Sanders, wideout Michael Haynes, tackle Chris Hinton and quarterback Chris Miller. The Giants lost a boatload of starters, including special teams



The owners won't let a Buc like Trent Dilfer (12) develop a natural rivalry with Miami.

JIM MIDDLETON

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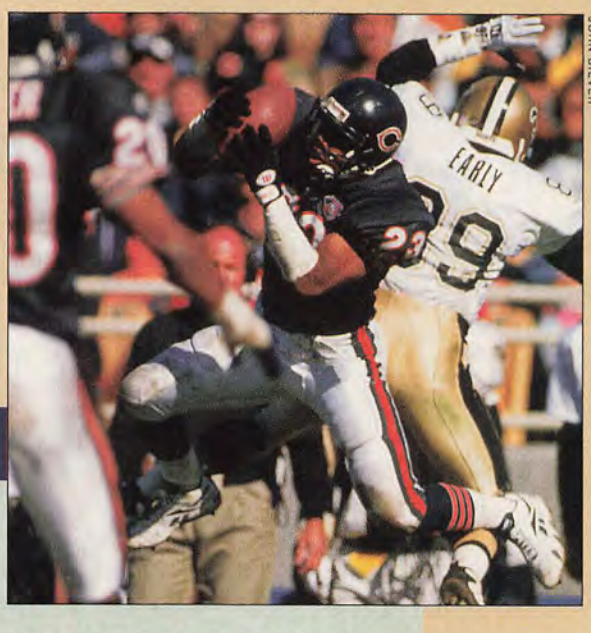
ace Myron Guyton, cornerback Mark Collins and quarterback Phil Simms, because of the salary cap. And during two off-seasons the Eagles lost prime defenders Reggie White, Seth Joyner and Clyde Simmons as well as running back Keith Byars and defensive back Andre Waters, both of whom were team leaders.

Maybe it isn't so odd. The early lesson here is that the star player isn't as irreplaceable as we had thought. Take the Eagles. Center David Alexander has said that this is the first year since he joined the team in 1987 that he has felt totally comfortable in the locker room, which had been a fractious place because offensive and defensive players didn't get along. Insiders think that coach Rich Kotite is glad to be rid of some of the high-profile players because they retained their loyalty to Buddy Ryan even after he was fired as coach.

New players like defensive end William Fuller and linebacker Bill Romanowski have been totally committed to Kotite ever since they arrived. "Keith Byars made one statement when he left that I couldn't believe," Kotite says. "He said, 'They're dismantling a great team.' How can you say that! We didn't win a playoff game with those guys."

Kotite is correct when he says the game "is played with heart and determination, not glitz and stars. The game has to be played from the neck up." You need talent, but less-talented players working in harmony might make teams better.



JOHN BIEVER

Shaun Gayle (23) helped the Bear D achieve its goals—number 6, in particular—against the Saints.

GOAL MEDALISTS

LIKE MOST teams, the Bears have specific statistical goals that they hope to achieve every week. In their training complex are magnetic boards used to illustrate coach Dave Wannstedt's game-stat targets for offense (12 goals), defense (13) and special teams (10). When a goal is met in a given game, a 2¼-inch Bear-helmet magnet is affixed, signifying success. Failure means that the space is left helmetless.

These days a large rectangular piece of black posterboard covers the results for the first three weeks of the season. In embarrassing losses to Philadelphia and Minnesota in Weeks 2 and 3, the Bear defense surrendered a combined 72 points and achieved only four of 26 goals. So Wannstedt ordered the funereal shroud and told his troops that they were starting a new season.

It may be sophomoric, as many motivational techniques in sports are, but the Bears got the point. "We saw it as an opportunity to start the season over," says defensive tackle Chris Zorich. The Bears are now 3–0 in the postblackout era. Here is how the Bear defensive goal list looked after Sunday's 17–7 win over New Orleans, with an X marking the spot of each goal fulfilled.

	Tampa	Phil.	Minn.	Jets	Buff.	N.O.
1. *Win*	X			X	X	X
2. *Hold foe to 17 points or less*	X			X	X	X
3. *Hold foe to 3.8 yards per rush*		X				
4. *Hold foe to 5.6 yards per pass*	X			X	X	
5. *Hold foe to 295 yards per game*					X	
6. *Intercept 1 of each 21 passes*					X	X
7. *Sack QB 1 of 12 pass attempts*	X			X		
8. *Stop foe on 65% of 3rd downs*				X	X	
9. *No TDs after [turnovers]*	X			X	X	X
10. *No TDs or FGs in final 2:00*	X		X	X	X	X
11. *65% of game no drive over 7 plays*	X			X	X	
12. *No more than 1 big play**	X		X	X	X	X
13. *Force 2 turnovers per game*			X	X	X	X

*Big plays are plays of at least 25 yards

Dispatches

A Buddy Ryan–coached team hasn't allowed a 100-yard rushing game to a back since 1989. The streak continued Sunday, even in the Cowboys' 38–3 romp, when Emmitt Smith and Lincoln Coleman of the Cowboys were held to a combined 79 yards by Ryan's Cardinals. . . . Barring a surprising turnaround, the sun is setting on Jack Pardee's coaching tenure in Houston. In the first five weeks of the season Oiler players ripped offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride, and cornerback Cris Dishman said publicly that the Oilers weren't good enough to turn their season around after starting 1–4. How can Pardee allow such mutinous outbursts? Gilbride had been Pardee's heir apparent, but friction has developed with owner Bud Adams, who wants Gilbride to play tight end Pat Carter more. Gilbride has to be agonizing over the fact that the Oilers would not let him out of his contract to take the top job at the University of South Carolina last year. . . . Green Bay general manager Ron Wolf is one of the few league executives openly critical of the relatively generous plan that has been adopted to stock the two expansion teams. "The older expansion teams were never afforded this kind of opportunity," he says. "The new expansion clubs could be contenders by the second season and maybe even the first, and I don't think that what an owner paid for his franchise should play that big a role in determining how quickly his team can be competitive."

The End Zone

Maybe it really is time for the Rams to leave Los Angeles. Brian (Kato) Kaelin, who has parlayed living in the guest house on O.J. Simpson's property into his 15 minutes of fame, was a guest of the Rams at their game in Green Bay on Sunday. He flew home on the team charter after the Pack beat L.A. 24–17. ■

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by JOHN WALTERS

Changing Signals

ON MONDAY afternoon, Sept. 26, Nebraska coach Tom Osborne was talking about what his team's offensive strategy would be without starting quarterback Tommie Frazier, who was in a Lincoln hospital for treatment of a blood clot in his right leg. "Oh, same as always," said Osborne. "You know . . . [pause for effect] up the middle. Pass every 10th play [tight-lipped smile, wait for reaction]."

Everybody laughed. They all thought he was joking.

Well, Osborne wasn't joking. Last Saturday the second-ranked Cornhuskers tore loose from an ugly 9–3 halftime lead over Oklahoma State with two third-quarter touchdowns en route to a 32–3 victory. A total of 23 plays, two passes. Right according to plan.

Is it possible that the dour Osborne had foreseen that his quarterback for the second half of Saturday's game would be a 5′ 11″, 165-pound sophomore walk-on from Wahoo, Neb., a coach's dimpled kid who would look more at home in the woodwind section than behind center?

Not likely. No one could have imagined the damage done to Nebraska's quarterback position in the last two weeks; no one could have predicted that Matt Turman—called the Turman-ator by his teammates for his decidedly un-Arnold-like appearance—would assume the controls of a team designed for Frazier to guide to the national title.

Here's how it happened. In August 1992, Nebraska had five scholarship quarterbacks in camp: senior Mike Grant, redshirt freshmen Tony Veland and Brook Berringer and true freshmen Frazier and Ben Rutz. Option specialist Veland won the job but broke his collarbone before the first game. Grant stepped in, but Frazier beat him out by the sixth game.

Frazier became a star, so Veland was moved to safety and Rutz transferred to Northeastern Oklahoma A&M. Also, Nebraska signed no quarterbacks in 1993, the first time that had happened in Osborne's 21 years as coach in Lincoln.

Frazier, a junior from Bradenton, Fla., started this season as the most dangerous option quarterback in the country. But a blood clot caused him to miss Nebraska's fifth game, a 42–32 victory over Wyoming on Oct. 1, and a second clot formed early last week. Frazier underwent surgery to treat the clot, and because he will be on blood-thinning drugs for several months, his season is over.

Enter Berringer, a strong-armed 6′ 4″, 210-pound junior with a name out of *Dynasty* and feet about as quick as John Forsythe's—not ideal for running the option. Berringer suffered a partially collasped lung in the Wyoming game, his first start, and a prescheduled X-ray at halftime of the Oklahoma State game showed a recurrence of the collapse. This led Osborne to turn from his chalkboard and say to the Turmanator, "Matt, get ready."

"I wouldn't say I was frightened," Turman said after the game. "I was anxious." For a kid whose high school graduating class had 32 students, Turman came up big, getting Nebraska in the end zone three times. All in all he turned in a respectable performance but with unbeaten Kansas State and Colorado ahead on the schedule, the Turmanator's role could be terminated; Veland may be moved back to quarterback, full time.

Veland? Turman? Berringer? It was Frazier who made Nebraska's offense

PHIL HUBER

Nebraska's Turman, an undersized walk-on, did enough to finish off Oklahoma State.

DAVID LIAM KYLE

most effective. "Tommie was the best quarterback in the country for our offense," says offensive tackle Zach Wiegart. "But you can't let the loss of one guy ruin your season. With our offensive line, I don't care if the quarterback is *Rudy*."

Hey, Zach, your quarterback *was* Rudy. —TIM LAYDEN

Town Pride

"I'd like to get people to think of Youngstown, Ohio, as a place where there's a good football team," says Jim Tressel, coach at Youngstown State. "Not as the place where the steel mills used to be."

That task may prove impossible, but Tressel is making progress. By leading the Penguins to Division I-AA national championships in 1991 and '93, and a 52-9-2 record since 1990, he has generated nationwide respect and unprecedented support for his team. For Saturday's homecoming game against defending Division II champion North Alabama, a school-record crowd of 17,411 turned out as Youngstown won 17–14.

"The program is vital to our community," says Youngstown mayor Patrick Ungaro. "Losing the mills took a tremendous psychological toll. We're starting to regain confidence, and YSU football has been a big part of that."

Between 1977 and '81, nearly 25,000 Youngstown steelworkers, almost 40% of the city's workforce, lost their jobs. Today unemployment holds at 13.6%, and roughly one fourth of the city's 95,732 residents live below the poverty level.

"It's grim," says Thomas Finnerty Jr., senior researcher at Youngstown State's Center for Urban Studies. "But the team gives us something to rally around. Winning can take your mind off other things."

When Tressel took over in 1986, Youngstown State, situated in an area—northeast Ohio—with a rich high school football tradition, was overlooked by local football fans. Tressel set out to turn the situation to his advantage. Emphasizing community pride, he coined the phrase "the State of Youngstown" to refer to the area within a 60-mile radius of the city, where he has done most of his recruiting. It is no accident that the heart of the Penguins' offense—center Chris Sammarone, quarterback Mark Brungard and running back Shawn Patton—grew up within a short drive of campus.

Youngstown State had the weight of an entire city behind it in bowling over North Alabama.

Though the homegrown cast has changed from year to year, Tressel's teams have a continuing reputation for being able to withstand adversity. In 1991 the underdog Penguins used a 19-point fourth quarter to beat Marshall 25–17 and win the championship. And on Saturday, after North Alabama tied the score at 14

Players of the Week

Offense

Washington senior Napoleon Kaufman gained 254 yards on 27 carries in a 34–20 win over San Jose State, the most yards for a Husky since Hugh McElhenny ran for 296 in 1950.

Defense

Linebacker Dana Howard, an Illinois senior, had an interception and 14 tackles, including two sacks, in the Fighting Illini's 24–10 upset of Ohio State in Columbus.

Small Schools

Chris Hatcher, a senior at Division II Valdosta (Ga.) State, completed 39 of 44 passes for 418 yards and five touchdowns as the Blazers defeated New Haven 38–7.

early in the fourth quarter, Youngstown controlled the final 12 minutes by grinding out a drive that ended with a field goal and clinched the win with a defensive stand.

"There are tough people in this city and we represent them by playing tough football," says Sammarone. "The people of Youngstown don't give up. Neither do we."

—KOSTYA KENNEDY

On the Shelf

When Cal quarterback Dave Barr broke his collarbone in the second quarter of the Bears' 26–7 win over UCLA last week, it likely put him out for the rest of the regular season. But you can be sure he'll remain involved in the game, both on the sidelines and in the bookstores.

Bookstores? Barr is a voracious reader, especially of sports nonfiction. In fact, he has provided us with the following list of five must-reads:

1) *Bootlegger's Boy*, by Barry Switzer with Bud Shrake. "My favorite. It's stuffed with fascinating stories about Switzer and his days at Oklahoma."

2) *Goat Brothers*, by Larry Colton. "It's the story of five Cal fraternity brothers and takes them from their wild college days of the '60s to the present."

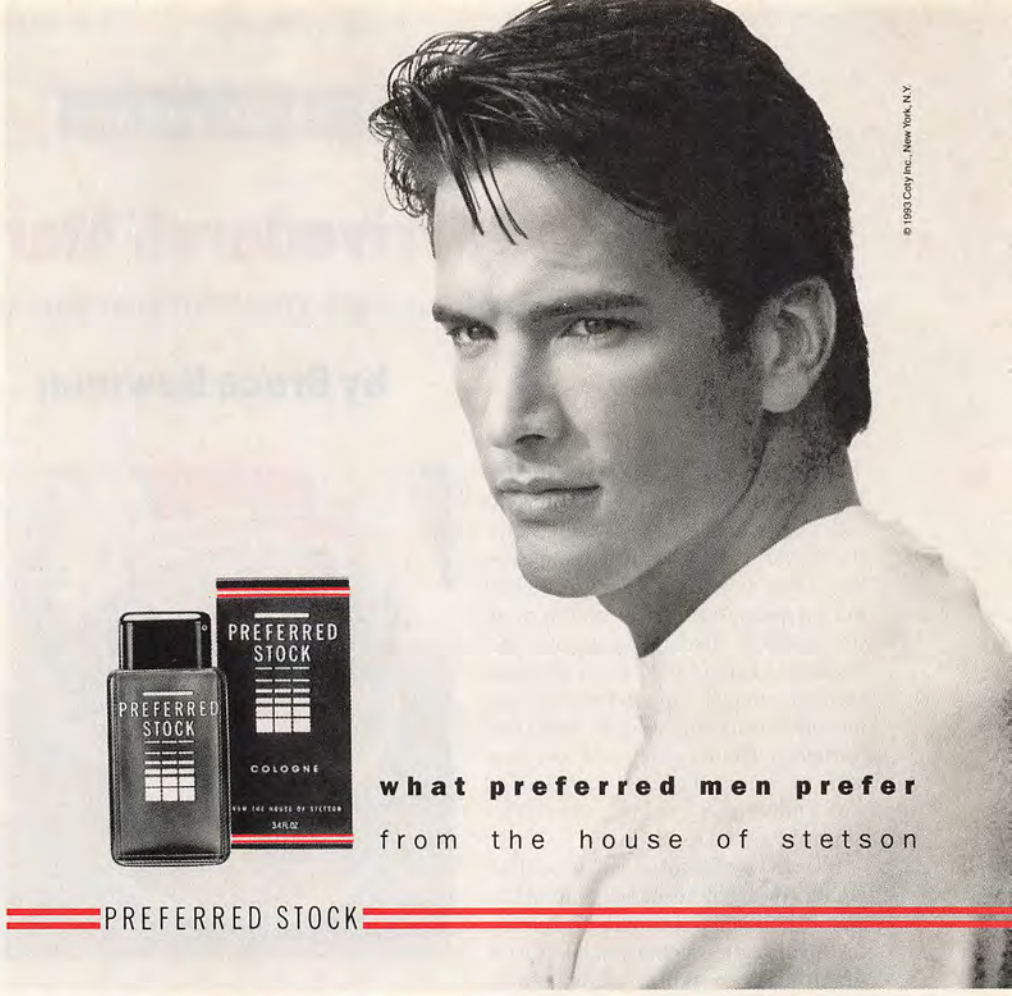
3) *Bleeding Orange*, a history of Texas football by John Maher and Kirk Bohls. "You can't help but be a Longhorn fan after reading this."

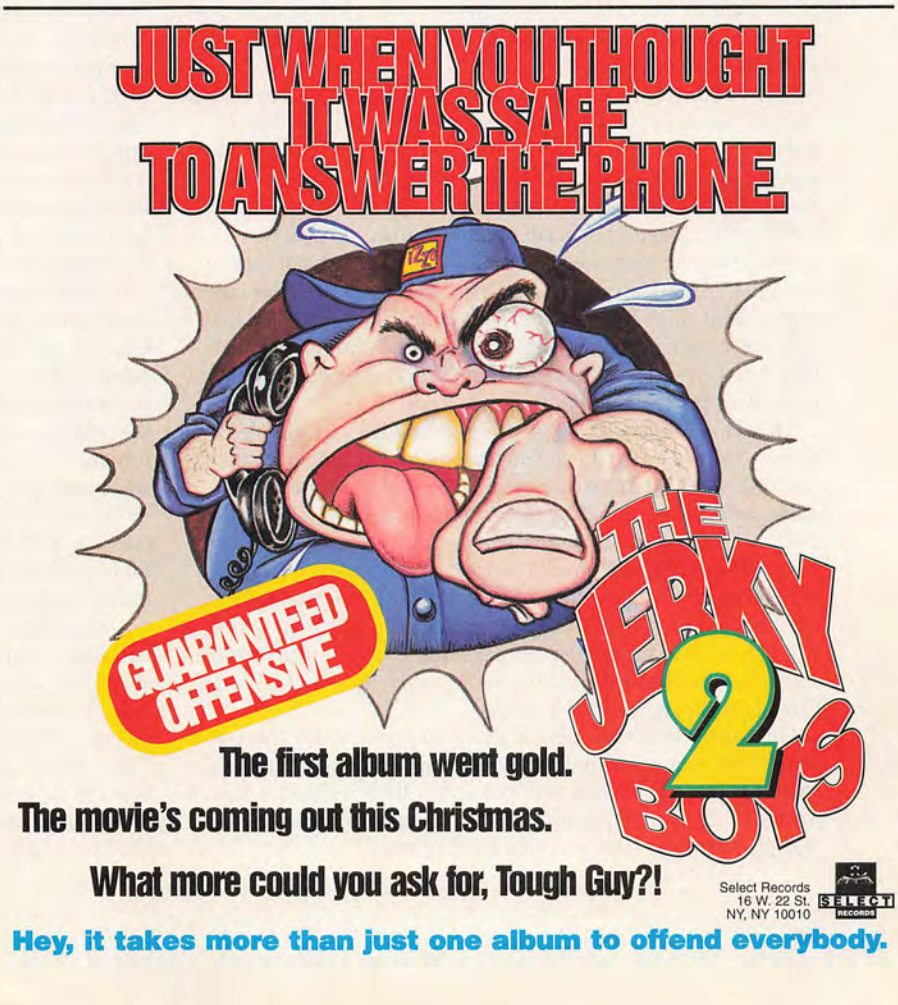
4) *Joe: His Fight for Life*, by Lena Roth. "Lena's son Joe was an All-America quarterback at Cal in 1976 who died of cancer shortly after his senior year. I couldn't put this down."

5) *Audibles*, by Joe Montana and Bob Raissman. "Montana was my hero growing up in the Bay Area. Like me, he started out as a fifth-string college quarterback."

Barr also praised Colorado coach Bill McCartney's book, *From Ashes to Glory*. In this case Barr had the opportunity to meet the author. When he spotted McCartney at Denver's Stapleton Airport in late January, Barr approached him. "Coach, I just read your book, and I loved it," he said.

For his part, McCartney didn't know that his admirer was one of the best quarterbacks in the country. As McCartney walked away, Barr called out the oft-used mantra of McCartney's autobiography: "Keep fighting the good fight!" We trust Barr will now heed those words too. ■

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Arrivederci, Mario

A long ride as one of auto racing's great drivers came to an end for Mario Andretti

by Bruce Newman

THE END was clearly in sight for Mario Andretti as he climbed into his race car at Laguna Seca Raceway for the Grand Prix of Monterey on Sunday. Or it would have been if he had put on his glasses. The crews from all the teams he had raced against and regularly beaten for 31 years had seen the end coming, and after the Sunday morning warmup session they had formed a gantlet along the pit lane and, wearing T-shirts emblazoned with ARRIVEDERCI, MARIO, cheered for him as he rolled to a stop.

It was a wonderful sound, those Italianate vowels of his name pealing like church bells amid the methanol fumes. Five years ago somebody actually took the trouble to poll Americans and prove that the name Mario Andretti was better known and more indelibly associated with racing in the U.S. than A.J. Foyt's and Richard Petty's combined.

"He has the perfect racing name," says driver Arie Luyendyk. "He was lucky he was born with a name like Mario Andretti." This is true, of course. What husband, driving home too fast late at night, hasn't been instructed affectionately but firmly, "Take it easy, Mario," by his wife?

For more than three decades Andretti towered over his competition, an accomplishment that would have been rare enough in American sports even if he were not 5′ 6″. How could such a dainty man have created such a long shadow? "The first time you compete against him," says driver Bobby Rahal, "it's like, 'Look, it's Mario Andretti!' And that feeling never really goes away, the feeling that this guy is a god."

There are other drivers—artists like Jimmy Clark and Ayrton Senna—whose best days will linger longer in our memory than Andretti's, but no one was ever as successful as Andretti in so many different kinds of racing. From 1966 through '69 he won 29 Indy Car races (his eventual total would be 52), while also winning both the Daytona 500 stock car race and the 12 Hours of Sebring in '67. The following year he drove in Formula One for the first time and immediately took the pole at Watkins Glen (though he didn't finish the race). He was competing in only his second full season of F/1 racing, in '78, when he won the World Championship driving for Lotus.

He won his final race more than a year ago, an Indy Car event at Phoenix. But other than the parade lap he was asked to lead so his fans could give him a proper send-off on Sunday, Andretti had not led a race all season—not for a single lap, despite driving one of the strongest cars on the circuit.

"Maybe now he doesn't want to take as many chances as he used to because he's already achieved so much," says second-year driver Adrian Fernandez, whose car was the last one Andretti passed on Sunday before his engine let go four laps from the finish. In his best moments Andretti created openings for himself where there were none and ruthlessly defended his own position. "He will not give an inch, even now," Luyendyk said before Sunday's race. "Mario has a tendency to go over that line between being smooth and doing whatever it takes to go fast."

The decision to announce his retirement a year ahead of time so that he could embark upon his Arrivederci, Mario tour—and its attendant merchandising ventures—seemed to tempt the gods, who had treated Andretti so tenderly that in his career he missed only two races because of an injury. Twice this season he was involved in collisions with teammate Nigel Mansell, for whom Andretti never developed any conspicuous affection and whom he blamed for many of his misfortunes over the past two seasons. "The thing you have to understand about Mario," says Penske driver Paul Tracy, who won easily at Laguna Seca, "is that on the racetrack, nothing is ever Mario's fault. Ever."

A month ago at his home racetrack in Nazareth, Pa., after inexplicably clouting Eddie Cheever's car and putting both Cheever and himself into the wall early in the race, Andretti came as close to admitting blame as he probably ever had. For years there had been questions about how well Andretti could see other cars on the racetrack, though he was held in such high esteem in the garages that these inquiries were usually whispered quietly. He does have a pair of glasses, though he never wears them in public—and certainly not in the race car. After he hit Cheever, Andretti quietly conceded, "I didn't see him," and sounded for a moment as if he were about to take the blame for the accident. But he stopped himself just in time.

He finished 19th on Sunday, running as high as seventh before his engine quit. "All of a sudden everything just went silent," he said. If Andretti had stayed too long at the races, nobody seemed in any particular hurry for him to leave, least of all him. "The cycle of life is what's happening," Andretti said. "The old guys go home, new guys come out. There's no question that I've driven past my prime, but, realistically, I'm still capable of bringing home results." He still couldn't see the end coming, but he could hear it. ■

GEORGE TIEDEMANN

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